

THOMAS JEFFERSON

(CHAMPION OF HUMAN RIGHTS)

by

GENE LISITZKY

6237

UTTARPARA

JAIKRISHNA PUBLIC LIBRARY

INDIAN UNIVERSITY PUBLISHERS

KASHMERE GATE

DELHI-6

Copyright 1933, by Gene
Lisitzky Abridged from
the Book and reproduced
by Permission of The
Viking Press Inc.

DONATED BY SRI K.C. GUPTA

Uttara Jadhav in Public Library

Acq. No. 17136 Date 11-9-80

PRINTED AT : NATIONAL PRINTING WORKS, DELHI.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The life sketches of the great builders of nations have always been a source of inspiration for the coming generations at all times and in all countries.

Thomas Jefferson lived and fought for the economic and political recognition of the United States of America under similar conditions as prevail in India to-day. Our problems of consolidation of our political independence, economic prosperity and religious tolerance, are the same which he achieved for his country during his life time.

The third President of the United States was a great exponent of the idea of free speech, free press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion and trial by jury in *all* cases. He was a man of ideas as well as of action. He fought for the cause dear to his heart with no eye on compromise.

This small book bringing out the characteristic features of Thomas Jefferson's life has been written particularly for the use of students and it is hoped that they along with general reading public, will benefit by imbibing the qualities of a man of head and heart. The Publishers are grateful to the Author and the Viking Press Inc. for their permission to publish this book in India. May this book appeal to you all.

INDIAN UNIVERSITY PUBLISHERS

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page</i>
I	Two Worlds	1
II	William And Mary	10
III	Belinda And The Law	16
IV	The Burgess of Virginia	21
V	The Manor And The Lady	30
VI	Are Americans Englishmen ?	34
VII	The Declaration	42
VIII	The Inner Revolution	52
IX	Wartime Governor	65
X	Return to Battle	76
XI	France	82
XII	The Family Abroad	86
XIII	A Republican Court	89
XIV	The Duel In The Cabinet	104
XV	France Or England ?	117
XVI	Mr. President	132
XVII	He Still Lives	148



Virginia included what we now call Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky and a great part besides, of what is now Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

V

I. TWO WORLDS

The colony of Virginia was divided into two parts so different from each other that they did not seem to belong to the same country. If you glance at a map of Virginia, you will see that the whole western end of it looks as if a great cat had drawn his paw through the sand, scratching up a long line of parallel ridges with his claws. This is the Appalachian Mountain Range, of which the easternmost ridge is in fact called the Blue Ridge Mountains. From here Virginia's rivers start on their passage to the sea. The country they flow through is somewhat hilly, and is called the Piedmont, which means simply "foothills."

Midway to the sea the land becomes a flat plain. Ages ago this whole eastern half of Virginia sank down so

low that the sea came in and filled the river valleys to the brim. So now the tides sweep their salt water up the James, the York, the Potomac, and the Rappahannock, and when the tide is high these large rivers actually flow backwards ! Hence this part is called the Tidewater country.

The first settlers in this land built their homes on the eastern plain. They dotted the banks of the "drowned river valleys" with their great slaveholding plantations. The small ocean-going ships of those days could ride up with the tide to the planters' very doorsteps. The ships brought the Tidewater planters the latest books and newspapers from England, the latest styles and gossip from London, the newest comforts and inventions from Liverpool. They took from the plantations great cargoes of tobacco, letters to friends in England, and young sons going "home" for an education. In short, Tidewater planters were first of all Englishmen, who kept in closer touch with the mother country three thousand miles away than did with New York or Boston on the same seacoast.

When all the eastern plain of Tidewater Virginia had been taken up for plantations, the colonists began to push westward, "up country" into the foothills of the Piedmont. Here the rivers were too narrow, too shallow, and too rapid for ocean-going vessels. Here the news from England was never fresh and scarcely ever personal or important. Here manufactured goods had often to be transported over tiresome overland roads

I. TWO WORLDS

and dangerous trails. Instead of English manor houses there were log cabins ; instead of great plantations there were small farm clearing in the forests. In short, here you had pioneers, men who were already Americans before they were Englishmen. Thus there were two worlds in Virginia when Thomas Jefferson's father was a young man. To the east were the Tidewater Virginians who were called "Tuckahoes," to the west the Up Country settlers who were known as "Cohees." The Jeffersons, father and son, were to be among those who brought them together again.

The father of the third president of the United States was born in 1707 in Chesterfield County midway between the aristocratic Tidewater and the primitive Piedmont. The Jeffersons had already been American for some generations, but had not become large estate owners. Peter Jefferson had received no regular school education, but he managed to read a great deal not only of the best literature of the time but also of scientific and technical works. He taught himself mathematics and even passed the examinations which made him county surveyor. At the age of twenty-four Peter Jefferson was appointed a magistrate of Goochland County where he then lived. He was also sheriff of the county, but his work took him over the whole country, and it was thus that he met William Randolph who became his best friend. William was a real "Tuckahoe." Indeed, though only by accident, the estate he had inherited from his father was called Tuckahoe.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

In 1737, when Peter Jefferson was thirty years old, there was started one of those land rushes which have swept America like a fever many times since. Soon Jefferson and Randolph were following the James River westward in search of new plantations.

A few miles below where the Rivanna empties into the James River, the two pioneers came to Dungeness, the plantation of Isham Randolph, uncle of William. Kept here for a while by the open-handed hospitality for which these estates were so famous, the young men had time to admire the plantation with its hundred slaves and the scientific ideas of its master, for Isham Randolph was fairly well-known as a naturalist and botanist. But especially, as far as Peter was concerned, there was Jane Randolph, the oldest daughter of the house, to admire.

Finally the young men continued up the Rivanna until they came to some likely-looking land that had not been taken up. Determined to be neighbours they laid out their claims on opposite sides of the river, not far from where it descended from the mountains. The Rivanna is not a very deep or wide stream at this point, but William still considered it a barrier between them. He therefore made Peter accept four hundred acres of land, suitable for a building site, on his side of the river.

Peter Jefferson and William Randolph were the third and fourth settlers in this territory. Their purpose was, of course, the raising of wheat and tobacco. Their

I. TWO WORLDS

first task was to prepare the land for farming. Brushwood had to be cleared, workmen and slaves transported, farm tools bought or borrowed. On his several trips back and forth between Goochland and the Rivanna, Jefferson became a frequent visitor at Dungeness. In 1739 Peter Jefferson married Jane Randolph, then nineteen years old. Now William Randolph and Peter Jefferson were cousins as well as friends.

On the site allotted him for that purpose by Randolph, Jefferson erected the new home for his bride. He called the plain weatherboarded house on the north bank of the Rivanna "Shadwell" after the London parish in which Jane Randolph had been born. Here, while the wilderness was being conquered, were born Jane, Mary, Thomas, and Elizabeth Jefferson.

By the year 1744 the region around Shadwell had become so fairly well populated with new plantations that it was made into the county of Albemarle. A county needs a government. A government needs officers. Peter Jefferson was now an old settler, and it is not surprising that he was made one of the justices of the peace. William Randolph, too, was honoured with the position of sheriff.

Every frontier colony had military as well as civil duties. The redskins had not ceased entirely to be a menace, and now the French in the Ohio territory were getting too close for comfort. Jefferson was therefore made lieutenant colonel of the militia under the command

of the surveyor, Professor Joshua Fry of William and Mary College.

In 1745, when Tom Jefferson was two years old, William Randolph died. William's dying request to his best friend and cousin was that Peter should take care of the three children he left behind. He asked especially that Peter should look out for the education of his small son, Thomas Mann Randolph, and that, the better to do this, Peter should move to Tuckahoe, Randolph's estate in Goochland Country, with his whole family. All these last wishes of his dying friend Peter faithfully fulfilled.

How full Mrs. Jefferson's heart must have been as they approached Tuckahoe through the avenue of beautiful elms ! It was six years now since she had last lived in a lovely old house like this, surrounded by English gardens with rose bushes, lilies, and bridal wreath. Once in the house they found themselves on the brow of a wooded hill with a magnificent view of the James River and of the plantation around.

Now there were seven children in Tuckahoe, enough for plenty of fun, as well as enough to make up a school. Besides Tom, there were his two older sisters Jane and Mary, his baby sister Elizabeth, and the three Randolph children : Judith, Mary and Thomas Mann. There was a little schoolhouse right on the grounds of the estate. Here at the age of five Tom began to learn reading, writing and ciphering.

I. TWO WORLDS

For seven years Tom Jefferson lived in Tuckahoe, learning to be a gentleman, although, from his father's example, never ceasing to be a frontier boy. Here began his love for a life lived among beautiful surroundings.

The heart of Tidewater existence was tobacco, which was now in great demand all over Europe. The Virginians lived almost entirely on tobacco exports to England. Tobacco became a sort of money with which a preacher's salary could be paid or a crinolina skirt be bought.

A great Tidewater plantation required many field hands, but working men were hard to find in the colonies where any man might become a plantation owner like Peter Jefferson. Thus, on account of tobacco, many Negro slaves were kidnapped from their African homes and sold in Virginia.

At Tuckahoe the Jefferson family had been increased by two more sisters, Martha and Lucy. Now Peter Jefferson was ready to go back to his own estate at Shadwell, having carried out his friend Randolph's wishes. Tom was nine years old now and fit to go on with more advanced schooling. In 1752 Peter sent his son to live with the Reverend William Douglas, a Scotch clergyman in Louisa County, who taught Greek, Latin, and French. The rest of his family he took back to his Up Country home in Albemarle County. Shortly afterwards he was sent as representative of Albemarle County to the House of Burgesses. In 1755 he was made County

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Lieutenant, or Governor of Albemarle.

Good scholar though he was, Tom looked forward to the vacations he spent in Shadwell with keen eagerness. He was growing up into a tall, strong youngster, loving exercise and the out-of-doors. An old woodsman like Peter Jefferson would surely know how to make his son's boyhood a happy one, and how to make Shadwell the most interesting place in the world. Besides hunting and riding and boating and Indian lore, he taught his son to appreciate the beauties of the country around him.

In August 1757, Peter Jefferson died. Fourteen-year-old Tom became head of the family, consisting of his widowed mother, his six sisters, and his baby brother Randolph. To the latter Peter in his will had bequeathed a smaller estate he owned on the James River known as Snowden ; to his oldest son he left Shadwell. Tom was now a large landed proprietor. Of course, until he was a little older, he would be under the guardianship of one of his father's friends, John Harvie.

One of Peter Jefferson's last requests was that Tom should have a classical education. So Tom's guardian sent him off to live and study with the Reverend James Maury, " a correct classical scholar," who had a log-cabin school only fourteen miles from Shadwell in Louisa County. In Parson Maury's log schoolhouse Tom studied Latin for the next two years.

I. TWO WORLDS

The schoolboy continued to come home for his vacations. He no longer had his father's companionship, but he still had the habits his father had encouraged — roaming through the woods with a gun, riding over the plantation on horseback. He grew into ever closer comradeship with his older sister Jane. Their favourite evening entertainment was the playing of duets, she at the harpsichord, the eighteenth-century piano, and he on his violin, while they both sang psalms. The loneliness of his days was now relieved by the friendship he struck up with Dabney Carr, a neighbouring boy of his own age and with similar tastes. Now Tom had someone to tell his great desire to travel ; someone to share a passion for foreign lands that was never to leave him all his life. Tom also brought Dabney to his secret retreat. Across the river from Shadwell, on the land that Peter had first staked out, there was a hill about six hundred feet high. In Italian you would call a little mountain like that a *monticello*. Tom knew what he wanted most after travelling. When he grew up he would build a grand house on the peak of this "little mountain." It was to be *their* little mountain. They solemnly pledged each other that whoever died first would be buried by the other under their favourite oak.



Fauquier invited Jefferson to take part in the musicales which were held once a week at the Palace.

II. WILLIAM AND MARY

When he was not yet seventeen years old, Tom Jefferson rode to Williamsburg to enter College. The college was William and Mary. There were two other colleges in the colonies, Harvard in Massachusetts and Yale in Connecticut, but Southern boys were more likely to go to England for their education than to New England.

Williamsburg was the largest community Tom had ever seen. It was then the capital of Virginia and boasted two hundred wooden houses; brick and stone houses were considered unhealthy to live in. Through the centre of town ran the very wide main street, about three quarters of a mile long. At one end stood the college and at the other the capitol building. Midway

II. WILLIAM AND MARY

between the two was a square on which was situated a church and some public buildings. When Tom Jefferson rode up to William and Mary College, the place was not entirely strange to him. An uncle of his had once been its president, and Tom knew something of its romantic history.

After the visit of the Indian princess Pocahontas, King James had become interested in the education of her people and he had founded a school for Indian children here. But the people the king had sent over to found the school were all massacred by the Indians, who seem to have been extremely unwilling pupils.

However, seventy years later the school was again established. At the time Jefferson came to William and Mary, it had grown into three schools. There was first of all the original Indian school which now had two teachers and eight redskin pupils, and to which the children of Williamsburg also went during the day as an elementary school. Then there was the Latin school, or high school, which the boys attended until they were about fifteen, learning Latin and Greek from two teachers. And finally there was the college proper, like our modern college, with two professors besides the president of the entire college. All three schools had classrooms in the same building.

To enter the college Tom had to take a public examination. As a result of this test he showed himself to be a

THOMAS JEFFERSON

brilliant scholar, and so the masters decided to admit him at once into the third or Junior year.

Tom took a passionate interest in his studies. For him college was an adventure, in which his mind did exciting things instead of his body. He found that the discovery of new ideas, great thoughts, scientific problems and solutions could be more thrilling than bear tracks in the forest, more exhilarating than a race on horseback.

But in the course of studies the students were required to take was not made to be interesting, and Tom might very soon have lost his fresh excitement if one of his two professors had not then chanced to be Dr. William Small. All of Tom's courses came under the head of philosophy. One of his two professors taught him "moral philosophy," which included rhetoric (grammar, composition, and elocution), logic (the rules of correct thinking), and ethics (the principles of morality and conduct). Dr. Small, the other professor, taught him "natural philosophy," by which was meant mathematics and science (chiefly physics and astronomy).

Professor Small, when he came over from Scotland, had introduced a new method of conducting classes in the colonies. Before his time the students in colleges memorized their lessons and then recited them in class. Dr. Small brought in the lecture system. He did all the talking himself and let the students ask *him* questions. It was not long before Dr. Small noticed that a certain

II. WILLIAM AND MARY

pair of intelligent gray eyes were fixed most intently upon him while he lectured. They belonged to the red-haired lad who now and then asked him a keen question. Dr. Small sought this boy out after class. He took him out for walks. Soon Tom was daily companion, and a new world was opened to the boy. Professor Small was a friend of Erasmus Darwin, the eminent scientist and grandfather of the great Charles Darwin. James Watt, who was to invent the steam engine, was also his friend. From Small's conversation Tom got his first glimpse of the mighty labours of science in its attempt to draw a complete picture of the world in which we live.

Not far from the college lived Francis Fauquier, Licutenant Governor of Virginia. When Professor Small offered to introduce his pupil to the Governor, Fauquier was one of those typically clever men of the eighteenth century who wanted to know everything and to enjoy everything. He had been a director of the Bank of England and had written an important work on taxation. He was interested in physics and was a Fellow, or member, of the Royal Society, England's famous scientific academy. He was an accomplished musician. In short, he was everything that young Tom admired and wanted to be.

Fauquier seemed to be as genuinely delighted to meet the boy as was Tom to meet him. When he heard that Tom played the violin, Fauquier asked him to come and take part in the musicales which were held once a week

at the Palace. That part of Tom's education which Professor Small, or any school for that matter, could not give him he owed to Governor Fauquier. Not only did Fauquier lend the boy French and English books from his library ; he also acted as Tom's model for a man of the world. Tom observed the Governor's unfailing courtesy, the innumerable little politenesses that marked the trained gentleman of that day. The drawing room was a serious business in the eighteenth century ; it was the battle-ground of wit and the showplace of manners.

Professor Small introduced Tom to still another important friend of his college days. George Wythe was a brilliant young lawyer of about thirty, self-educated, but probably the finest Latin and Greek scholar in Virginia. These four—Fauquier, Small, Wythe, and Jefferson—made up a sort of informal little club that met once a week for dinner at the Governor's Palace.

Of course, Tom made friends of his own age in college. Dabney Carr, his old chum from back home, came to Williamsburg, and some of his mother's relatives lived in the college town. But chief among his new friends was John Page, who, like Jefferson, was later to become one of the first governors of the State of Virginia.

On his way home to spend the Christmas holidays Tom stopped at the plantation of Colonel Nathan Dandridge. Among the host of young people Tom's attention was caught by a man who seemed to enjoy a

II. WILLIAM AND MARY

great deal of popularity, though by his country speech and his awkward appearance he would seem to be a little out of place in the crowd of young dandies. Tom was immediately attracted by the tall, thin figure, slightly stooped, the pale face and homely features ; only the deep-set gray eyes were beautiful.

Tom learned by asking that this man's name was Patrick Henry, a near neighbour of Colonel Dandridge's. With the little money he had inherited from his father Mr. Henry had bought a country store, which had just failed. In the fortnight that Tom stayed at Colonel Dandridge's he and Patrick Henry became good friends.

Tom graduated from William and Mary on April 25, 1762, when he was just nineteen years of age. His Latin and Greek were now excellent and he could read the most difficult authors in these languages with ease. Though he could not yet speak French very well, he read it extensively. He promised himself to learn, besides, the Spanish, Italian, German, and the American Indian languages.

He was six feet tall now—he was still to grow two more inches—and very slim. His nose had a turned-up bump on the end of it and his face was too angular to be handsome but it immediately impressed everyone with its intelligence.



Jefferson became a friend of the Royal Governor, with whom he had many intellectual discussions. Later he became a lawyer.

III. BELINDA AND THE LAW

With his diploma and scholarly honours behind him, Tom's next business was to set about preparing himself for his chosen profession of the law. There were no law schools in those days ; legal training was acquired by working and reading under the direction of some member of the bar. The young apprentice would attend all the sessions of the court ; he would help prepare his master's cases ; and in his spare time he was supposed to read the law, and have the older man answer any difficult problems that came up. After clerking and studying in this manner until he had thoroughly absorbed the principles of law and acquired some practical experience, the young student appeared before a special board of Virginia lawyers and, if he won his license, could then hang out a shingle

III. BELINDA AND THE LAW

bearing his own name. Tom's friend, George Wythe, offered him a place in his office, after his first vacation.

For a student as brilliant as young Jefferson, who had completed his four years' college course in two, it would not have been very difficult to pass his lawyer's examination in a year or two. His friend Patrick Henry had done it in six months. But then Henry did not have this boy's enormous thirst for knowledge, or his grand ideas of what made an educated man and well-trained lawyer. For instance, Tom would not be satisfied with knowing a particular law. He would want to know its history; whether it came from the Romans, or the French, or the early Anglo-Saxons; whether it was still a good law or ought now to be changed; whether it helped people more or hindered them more.

To get this all-around picture of his chosen calling, this nineteen-year-old promised himself not to apply for a license for at least five years. Long before Tom felt himself ready, his old boyhood chum, Dabney Carr, had become a lawyer; but Tom stuck by his books. Of course, what Tom was doing was getting a university education. It was a one-man university in which Tom was all the students, but the professors were all the great men who had written books from the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans down to his own day. These professors taught him more than law. A friend once asked Jefferson for a good programme of studies for a law student. Jefferson gave him the programme he had made

THOMAS JEFFERSON

out for himself. It is really staggering.

Till eight o'clock in the morning employ yourself in physical studies :

Agriculture	Botany
Chemistry	Ethics and Natural Religion
Anatomy	Religion (Sectarian)
Zoology	Natural Law

From eight to twelve, read Law.

Twelve to one, read Politics.

In the afternoon, read History :

Ancient
Modern
English
American

From dark to bedtime :

Belles-Lettres, the poets, especially Shakespeare
Criticism
Rhetoric
Oratory

Where, in all this programme, did Jefferson find time for playing and practicing his violin ? For, when he was at college and for a dozen years thereafter, Tom gave three hours of each day to his fiddle. Nor must it be forgotten that all this while Jefferson somehow helped run his plantation, kept numerous notebooks, took a daily ride on horseback, continued to see his friends, especially Fauquier's circle, and even attended balls.

III. BELINDA AND THE LAW

The law never has been a study that allowed for a great deal of time for other things. Reading "old Coke" you had practically to learn a new language. To digest a single chapter with its liberal sprinklings of law Latin and old-fashioned French would ordinarily take a bright student a month. Yet, when Tom had finished this famous book, he was far from satisfied with his information and went on, delving back among the old laws of England before the Norman Conquest, back into the age of King Alfred the Great.

On Tom's twenty-first birthday, his first act to celebrate his new manhood was to have the Rivanna, which flowed past his land, turned into a useful stream. Though deep enough, the Rivanna was too full of obstructions to allow the farmers to use it for transporting their produce down country. Jefferson got up a petition, sent it to the House of Burgesses, and finally had the satisfaction of seeing the stream cleared for navigation. It was his first act of public service, and he was extremely proud of it.

During the winter he had been coming often into Williamsburg, to consult with his master Mr. Wythe, to attend court and assembly sessions, and to stock his library. He would then visit old friends, though his teacher Dr. Small had by now returned to England.

In his twenty-second year Jefferson spent more time at Shadwell, following his programme of studies and playing the violin. This year, 1765, was an important one for

THOMAS JEFFERSON

the Jefferson family. Dabney Carr, with whom Tom had hunted as a boy, married Tom's sister Martha. Two months after the wedding, Tom's older sister Jane died. Tom had loved Jane above all the rest. It was to her that he had told all his plans and thoughts. Now Tom was indeed lonesome at Shadwell.

At last Jefferson's five years were up. He knew himself now to be a well-rounded lawyer, a credit to his profession. He took his examination. He passed. In 1767, at the age of twenty-four, he was admitted to the bar.



Declaration is Jefferson's great Monument. He was a great Statesman and Scholar, Farmer, Architect and Musician

IV. THE BURGESS OF VIRGINIA

When Thomas Jefferson was first introduced to Patrick Henry, he had been told that Henry was on his way to Williamsburg to learn the law business. Tom, of course, imagined his new friend to be at the beginning of several years of study. But Henry had no intention of wasting his youth on books. Once arrived at Williamsburg, he thumbed through several volumes on law—when he could spare the time—for six months, and then boldly asked for an examination. He had the right, of course, to do this at any time that he could collect together three established members of the bar willing to examine him.

The three lawyers that Henry got together were George Wythe, Jefferson's brilliant friend and later master,

and Peyton Randolph and John Randolph, both kinsmen of Jefferson. These men questioned Henry about the law and—they found him very ignorant of it. Wythe was shocked and indignant. He would never, never sign his name to the license of a man whose only substitute for knowledge was colossal nerve! But the other two were won over. They saw genius in the young man, and the sort of persuasive tongue that they knew would be as effective with juries as it was with themselves. If Patrick Henry would promise to go home and study and catch up on his reading, they would sign. More, they would get a third lawyer to sign with them. Henry promised. Sad to relate, Henry did not keep his promise very well. He would conscientiously borrow law books from Tom, then go off on a hunting trip, and return the books unread. In the end, however, Peyton Randolph's confidence in Henry was justified. If Henry did not get much out of books, he did finally learn the law very well from practice. His speeches could stir the passions of the most cold-blooded and indifferent of audiences. In 1765 Henry's brilliance as a lawyer won him the election to the House of Burgesses. These were exciting times and Henry felt that the most exciting place to be in was the Virginia legislature. It was the time of the agitation over the Stamp Act.

The French and Indian Wars had been won by England and her colonies in 1763, but they had left the British Empire exhausted and burdened with taxes. It was felt by the English that the American colonies should shoulder a share of these expenses since, they said, the colonies had

IV. THE BURGESS OF VIRGINIA

benefited by these conquests. The English Parliament, among other irritating measures, passed a law by which a tax was collected on all papers and documents, whether legal, commercial, or periodical. When Patrick Henry rode his lean nag into Williamsburg, to take his seat in the House of Burgesses, the colony was seething with protest but did not know what to do about it. Of grumbling there was plenty but of action none. A brand-new member, he waited for the older men, the leaders, to take charge and lead. Nothing happened. At last, two days before the close of the session, when nothing had been done, Patrick Henry tore a blank page out of "old Coke" and wrote down a set of resolutions he wished the Burgesses to pass upon. He stood up and read the resolutions, and then began to speak.

Among the visitors who were crowded about the doorway in the lobby (for there was no gallery for outsiders) was the young law student, Thomas Jefferson. With intense interest he saw his friend Henry rise in his place and introduce a set of resolutions condemning the English laws. He saw him begin to speak, faltering at first and conscious of his awkward clothes. Then he saw him gradually draw himself up erect as he launched into the full tide of his oration. With all the other on-lookers Tom felt himself lifted up and carried away as Henry denounced the tyranny of the obnoxious Stamp Act. In the midst of this speech, Henry thundered, "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third—"

THOMAS JEFFERSON

"Treason!" cried the chairman. "Treason, treason!" echoed from several parts of the House. Jefferson held his breath. But Henry did not waver for an instant. Tossing his head still higher, he finished his sentence distinctly:

"—may profit by their example. If *this* be treason, make the most of it!"

In the midst of a terrific uproar, the resolutions were passed. The resolutions reminded the King that the colonists had certain inalienable rights as Englishmen, that the colonists had never given up these rights, that among them was the right to be taxed only by their own representatives, and that the colonists intended to pay only such taxes as they had levied upon themselves.

This last resolution was so defiant that it was passed by only one vote.

Patrick Henry, always impatient of mere details, mounted his skinny horse and, thinking his work done, cantered off for home. But the timid Burgesses had been enchanted into doing a braver thing than they could bear. With Henry and his accursedly spellbinding tongue out of the way, they wished the whole thing undone.

* When Tom wandered into the House the next day before the bell had rung for the hour of meeting, he found his uncle Colonel Peter Randolph and one of the Tory

IV. THE BURGESS OF VIRGINIA

members busily thumbing over the volumes on the clerk's table. They were searching for a previous case several years ago in which the House had stricken out of the minutes the record of its own vote on a certain measure. That day the House, with Henry absent, voted to cross out from the record its own vote on Henry's last resolution.

But all their striking out, all their timidity and alarm, did the Burgesses no good. Like it or not, history had been made under their noses. A large audience had heard the "treason speech" and had already begun to make it famous. Soon its message was being repeated in all Virginia and in all the colonies. And Tom Jefferson had heard it. In his mind, something had started to roll that was to roll far beyond Patrick Henry's defiance of the King. The thought grew, why just George the Third, why not defy all kings? Why resist just the tyranny of unjust taxation, why not all tyranny? Why stop merely with the rights of Englishmen; did they not have even greater rights to freedom as Americans, as men?

But it was to take more years of work and reading before Jefferson would see these ideas clearly. It was not until two years after the Stamp Act speech that he took his examination and became a lawyer, and it was only two years after that, in 1769, that he entered politics himself.

The same year that Jefferson won his right to practice

THOMAS JEFFERSON

at the bar, royal Governor Fauquier died. But it was not until the second year after Fauquier's death that Lord Botetourt, who had been appointed Governor by the King, came to Virginia. In Virginia, upon the arrival of the new Governor, a new House of Burgesses was called for.

Young Jefferson had been a lawyer for two years now. The practice of the law was not big enough a task to use up all his energy or all his learning. His reading, especially of Greek and Latin writers, had given him ideals of patriotism and service that were too wide and varied to be fulfilled in the daily humdrum business of helping people who had become entangled in the law. He felt obliged to run for a seat in the new House of Burgesses.

Elections were leisurely affairs then, and there was a particular etiquette to be observed if one was a candidate. Jefferson had to make a personal visit to each of the voters in Albemarle County and courteously solicit his vote. No man would vote for a candidate who had been so rude as not to ask him to do so. And Jefferson was obliged to keep open house and detail a servant for the special task of keeping the punch bowl full throughout the three days of the election. Otherwise he would have been thought too stingy to make a good Burgess. During those three days of mild excitement he stood at the polls with the other candidates, and he bowed low when he heard a vote cast for himself. There were no secret ballots. So after supplying the voters with lunch and punch for three days,

IV. THE BURGESS OF VIRGINIA

Tom learned that he was duly elected to the position once held by Peter Jefferson. He was only twenty-six years old.

On the third day of assembly the Burgess passed a set of resolutions condemning taxation without representation and protesting against the practice of trying colonists accused of treason in London, away from their own homes. Furthermore, the House called upon all the thirteen colonies to work together as one in seeking redress for their grievances against England. This last was by far the most important and the boldest action the members had yet taken.

Two days later the Royal Governor commanded the House to attend him in the Council Chamber. The hundred members rose in a body, tramped to the other end of the building, and ranged themselves around the Governor's throne-like seat.

"Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses," the Governor began majestically. "I have heard of your resolves and augur ill of your effects. You have made it my duty to dissolve you and you are dissolved accordingly."

So it had come at last! The rebellious Virginians were to be shown their place. Their protests were to be met with oppression. Thus Thomas Jefferson, after having served only five days as a legislator, was again a

THOMAS JEFFERSON

private gentleman. Some of the Burgesses decided that the time for talk was past and the time for action come. Jefferson joined a group that had hit upon a plan for a striking back at England. These former Burgesses drew up an agreement to boycott English goods until the home country should be forced, through the loss of its rich American trade, to see that she could not proceed against her colonies with such a high hand. Not as the House of Burgesses, but as private gentlemen, these same Virginians met the next day in the Apollo Room of the old Raleigh Tavern and signed their names to a set of agreements. This is what Jefferson ran his eye over as he signed. He promised :

To be a great deal more saving and industrious than ever before. Never again, as long as time should endure, to buy an article taxed by Parliament for the sake of raising revenue in America, except certain low-priced qualities of paper without which business simply could not go on. Never, in short, until the repeal of these irritating taxes and laws, to import any article from Britain, or in British ships, which it was at all possible to do without. Finally, to save all his lambs so that he could do without English imports of wool.

Of the 108 former members of the dissolved House, eighty-five signed the agreement. And in the elections for the new House, these eighty-five won back their seats ; the others did not. For the Governor had been impressed by this dignified revolt and had written to the King's

IV. THE BURGESS OF VIRGINIA

ministers counselling them to treat the Virginians with moderation. And it happened that just at this time the political party that came into power in England was opposed to the policy of annoying the colonists. So the Governor called for a new House, promising that there should be no more taxation without representation, and Jefferson found himself again among the Burgesses, where he stayed until that body came to the end of its existence.



Jefferson built a house for himself and he married a young woman who was specially attracted to him by his talent as a musician

V. THE MANOR AND THE LADY

When Tom Jefferson had played with Dabney Carr on the crown of his *monticello* and had talked of building a house on it, he began something that was to occupy his free moments for the rest of his long life. The older he grew the more ambitious became his plans.

Among the things most ardently discussed by Fauquier, Small, and Wythe at their weekly meetings was the beauty of buildings in Europe. Lacking the buildings themselves, these men would talk over or refer to Palladio's very popular book on architecture. Palladio was an architect of the sixteenth century who had fallen in love with the classical Roman style of building. The moment Tom saw Palladio's book he was captivated by it. There was

V. THE MANOR AND THE LADY

something about the simple grandeur of the Greek and Roman style that appealed to his nature just as classical literature did. This was the kind of building that seemed to go naturally with democracy on the one hand and culture on the other.

Tom made Palladio his textbook. He studied the work, practiced drawing, and made hundreds of sketches. While working over his plans, Jefferson had put up a little house on Monticello and begun to lay out his new orchard. However, in 1770, when Jefferson was serving his first term as a Burgess, Monticello was still almost entirely on paper. One day Tom and his mother were visiting at a neighbour's when one of his servants came running with bad news. Shadwell had caught fire and everything was in ruins !

Now the building of Monticello was not to be put off any longer. That summer Jefferson's mother, his sisters, and his brother went to live at the overseer's house, while he himself stayed in one of the building sheds on the mountain watching over the progress of the work.

All of a sudden the work that had been going on steadily for years began to seem too slow to Jefferson. His brain began to boil with architectural ideas. A strange change had come over the careful builder : he was in a hurry to finish his home.

These plans that he scribbled so furiously into his

THOMAS JEFFERSON

notebooks, as he sat lonely on his mountain top of an evening or in some dull tavern while travelling from one county courthouse to another, were curiously romantic. They certainly read more like a schoolboy's than like the work of a member of the House of Burgesses. What was it that had got into the young lawyer and politician, making him forget the classic simplicity of Palladio and instead imagine the sort of home found only in romantic novels? Well.....

There lived in Charles City County a prominent lawyer by the name of John Wayles. Jefferson had met him often in the courts of Williamsburg, and they had learned to like and respect each other. Mr. Walyes invited Mr. Jefferson to visit him at The Forest.

Living with Mr. Wayles was his daughter Mrs. Martha Skelton, a young widow of twenty-three, of exquisite charm and beauty. She was an accomplished musician, taking lessons on the harpsichord from Domenico Alberti, a famous Venetian artist. No sooner did Jefferson make this lovely lady's acquaintance than all his love for music suddenly blazed out into an unquenchable passion. Signor Alberti he engaged almost on the spot to give him advanced lessons on the violin. Jefferson was now rushing the completion of the small brick house that was to be the southeastern pavilion of Monticello. The big house itself was barely begun, and he dropped the work on it to interest himself in furniture.

V. THE MANOR AND THE LADY

First of all there would have to be a clavichord. But suddenly he cancelled his order for the instrument. He had seen a fortepiano, and would have one of those instead. If anything was new and better, Jefferson was sure to want it in preference to the old. Besides, as he wrote, he found "the workmanship of the whole very handsome and worthy the acceptance of a lady for whom I intend it."

So the secret was out.

On New Year's Day, 1772, Martha Wayles Skelton and Thomas Jefferson were united in marriage.



The cause of excitement this time was the " Gaspee incident "
of Rhode Island

VI. ARE AMERICANS ENGLISHMEN ?

Dabney Carr, Jefferson's brother-in-law and friend, was living and practicing law in Louisa County in 1773 when he was elected to the House of Burgesses. Although seven years younger, Carr was considered Patrick Henry's most formidable rival in oratory as they argued against each other in the Louisa County courthouse.

Like Patrick Henry eight years before, Carr came riding into Williamsburg during a time of special excitement, when the colonies were angry at still another inconsiderate act on the part of the mother country. The cause of excitement this time was the " *Gaspee* incident " of Rhode Island.

VI. ARE AMERICANS ENGLISHMEN ?

The year before a British man-of-war, the *Gaspee*, had for some time been lying in ambush on the sea-road between Newport and Providence. Like a pirate, the commander had without warning descended upon and boarded every craft that came out of these harbours. He was searching them for smuggled goods and contraband. The sympathies of the colonists were not with the British commander, and the Rhode Islanders felt very warm about what they regarded as his high-handed procedure.

Rhode Island was the only one of the thirteen colonies that elected its own Governor. This Governor protested to the commander of the *Gaspee*, stating that, unless the Governor was shown a warrant, the commander's searches and seizures were lawless, pure piracy.

One day the regular mail packet left Newport for Providence without informing the commander of the *Gaspee*. The *Gaspee* gave chase for twenty-three miles and then ignominiously ran aground. The captain of the packet gleefully told the adventure in Providence. Mr. Brown, the most influential merchant in the town, heard and chuckled. He knew that the time would not let the *Gaspee* off the reef before three o'clock. He sought out eight boats, each commanded by a sea-captain, and, with muffled oars they rowed out to the imprisoned *Gaspee*. They took off the sailors and men and set fire to the ship. The result was that a commissioned arrived from England with orders from the King that all those who had been responsible for the burning of the *Gaspee*

THOMAS JEFFERSON

and all the witnesses on both sides should be brought in a King's ship to London, where the trial would be held. But, although every boy in the streets of Providence knew just who had been in those eight boats, the commissioners could find no one in the whole city to tell them a thing.

Promptly the English Parliament passed a law, by the wording of which, if anyone so much as touched a button of a mariner's coat or the oar of a cutter's boat or the head of a cask belonging to the fleet, he was made guilty of a crime that could be punished by death and was to be transported to England for trial. Again Parliament had blundered, for now all the colonies were concerned, Virginia among them.

Dabney Carr agreed with Jefferson that the endless discussions about the *Gaspee* affair would come to nothing. They decided to call on Patrick Henry and the two brothers, Henry and Richard H. Lee, to meet them privately at the Raleigh Tavern to discuss plans of action.

"An attack on any one colony should be considered as an attack on the whole," said Jefferson when they had met. "But we must have some means of communications by which we will know what the other colonies are doing."

With the approval of the other three, he drew up resolutions for the forming of permanent Committees of

VI. ARE AMERICANS ENGLISHMEN ?

Correspondence between the colonies. Samuel Adams was doing the same thing in Massachusetts. If England intended to treat them as one, they must learn to act toward England as one. At the next meeting of the House, Carr proposed the Committees of Correspondence. The resolutions were carried ; delegates, including Jefferson, Carr, and Patrick Henry, were appointed to meet other delegates from all the other colonies at some central point.

Carr went home to tell his wife about his maiden speech, then set off again as he had some law business in Charlottesville. Hardly had he arrived in Charlottesville when he was taken violently ill with bilious fever. Before he could be taken home he died, and, before Jefferson could be informed, they buried him at Shadwell. Carr left three sons and three daughters. Jefferson took them and Martha Carr to live with him at Monticello. He had Dabney's grave moved to Monticello and buried under their oak, so fulfilling the promise he had made to Dabney fifteen years before.

In the meantime, though Dabney Carr was dead, his speech had done its work, and Jefferson's plan for Committees of Correspondence had been carried out. Among the first pieces of important news carried along this early grapevine system was the half-serious, half-comic story of the Boston Tea Party. How the young hotheads of Virginia roared when they heard that a whole cargo of English tea had been brewed in Boston harbour ! But

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Jefferson knew that events would move very quickly now, and he began to prepare for them.

Sure enough, word came from England that a law had been passed closing the busy port of Boston to all trade. The law was to go into effect from June 1, 1774, and British troops were being sent to enforce it.

Hastily the same little group—without Dabney Carr—who had pushed through the Committee of Correspondence gathered together to devise a new measure of protest. They found what they wanted by searching through some old Puritan accounts. The next day the House of Burgesses passed a bill appointing June 1 as a day of fasting and prayer in Virginia. It was based on a model taken out of Puritan history. When the bill was brought to the royal Governor for his signature, he promptly dissolved the House of Burgesses. But the members, instead of going home, called for a Convention. Virginia's charter said nothing of any convention, and so, if one were called, the Governor could have nothing to do with it. The purpose of this Convention was to elect delegates who would meet with delegates from the other colonies every year, thus forming a Continental Congress. Since the Congress was also illegal, the King could not even recognize it, let alone interfere in its decisions.

•

Naturally every county elected the same people to this Convention that it would have elected to the House of Burgesses. Duly elected from Albemarle County,

VI. ARE AMERICANS ENGLISHMEN ?

Jefferson mounted his horse late in July and set out for Williamsburg.

On the road he was overcome by a serious attack of dysentery. Too ill to move, especially on a jolting horse over the rough roads, he was compelled to take lodgings on the way. He lay in bed frantic with disappointment.

He had prepared a rough draft of some resolutions which he felt he simply must deliver to the convention. There was nothing to do now but send them on by express. He was too weak to work on them. Fortunately there were two copies, one of which he sent to Patrick Henry, the other to his cousin Peyton Randolph, who was to be chairman of the Convention. These resolutions contained some views that Jefferson had been thinking out since his student days. For one thing, remember that he came from the Piedmont. He never thought of himself as an Englishman. His ancestors had not chosen England as a birthplace. They just happened to be born there, and, when they grew old enough to know their own minds, they came away. In fact they had come to America because, for one reason or another, they did *not* like England.

So England and America, though they had the same King, were not the same country. Moreover, neither England nor the King had bought the new territory on the western shores of the Atlantic. The colonists had taken land in a wild and sparsely populated country. By their own hard work they had carved out farms and

THOMAS JEFFERSON

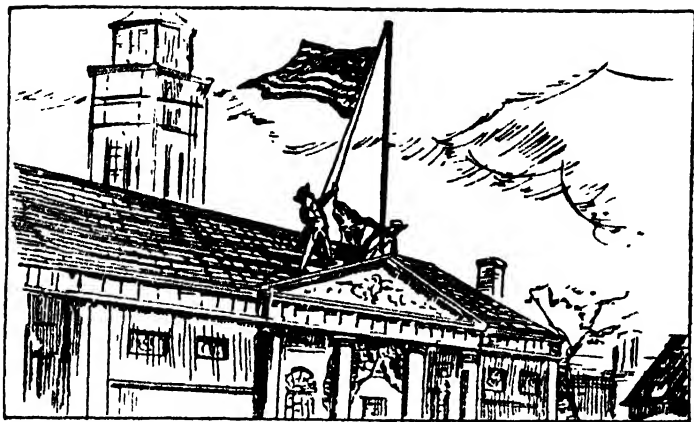
cultivated them. These lands belonged to them and to no one else, least of all to anyone living in England. By English law, all this land belonged to the King. He was supposed merely to have made a gift of its use to certain individuals. Jefferson's opinion was exactly the opposite. He said that the King had merely been chosen by the colonists to help *them* run the country. If he did not serve them well, they could just as easily choose another government.

Jefferson pointed out that it was only after the Norman Conquest that the King was considered to own all the land of his subjects and could give them out at his pleasure. These resolutions, for the instruction of delegates to the first Continental Congress, made a deep impression on many members of the Convention. But for the time being Jefferson's views seemed too bold; in fact, treasonable. All they dared insist upon was that they were Englishmen, had the rights of Englishmen, and could not be taxed without representation. So the Convention voted for a different, tamer set of resolutions and sent them together with delegates to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

In England Jefferson's resolutions were considered to be the best statement of the American position. The American agent who represented the House of Burgesses in London published the resolutions in a pamphlet under the title of *Summary View of the Rights of British America*. Edmund Burke, the great English statesman, who was a

VI. ARE AMERICANS ENGLISHMEN ?

friend of the colonists, saw the pamphlet and, after making a few changes, used it in one of his famous speeches. The net result for Jefferson was that the English government put his name down on the roll of dangerous subjects to be made outlaw—along with the two Adamses, John Hancock, Patrick Henry, and other leading patriots.



In Williamsburg, the British Flag over the State House was hauled down to make place for one with thirteen stripes

VII. THE DECLARATION

In Philadelphia the Continental Congress discussed ways and means of forcing the mother country to listen to her colonists' demands. It was decided to try commercial weapons. First, the boycott: after December 1774 the colonists would cease to import English goods. Then, if that should fail, the embargo: they would refuse to export their products to England.

On the 10th of May 1775 the second Continental Congress convened with Peyton Randolph again its president. But Randolph was also speaker of the House of Burgesses, and, when Governor Dunmore called a special session of the House, Randolph had to hasten back to Virginia. The next day the House settled down to con-

VII. THE DECLARATION

sider the special business, which concerned Lord North's conciliatory proposals. The English government offered to refrain from any further taxation of the colonies by Parliament if the colonies would in turn each agree to help England in case of war and make provision for the support of British soldiers. Now Lord North refused to consider the colonies as in any way united ; he had addressed his propositions to each colony separately. Moreover, he insisted that each colony must pledge itself to help put down rebellions in any other colonies. And finally the colonies must agree to certain measures that would mean the destruction of New England's entire sea trade. Instead of sending its reply to Lord North, the Virginia House decided to frame an answer and submit it first to the Congress, so that all the Colonies could speak as one.

To Peyton Randolph and, indeed, to the House as a whole, there seemed to be one man best fitted for the task of framing Virginia's reply—that man was Thomas Jefferson, the author of the famous *Summary View*. Not only was he now recognized as a legal artist, but his attitude toward England was absolutely clear and unwavering. Furthermore, Jefferson had already been chosen to take Randolph's place in Philadelphia while the latter conducted Virginia's affairs. So he would be taking his own ideas to the Congress.

The second Continental Congress, which had now been sitting for six weeks, was a feverish collection of men.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Official or not, a war with the mother country was on. Just before the meeting of the Congress, a battle had been fought at Lexington, Massachusetts, between British regulars and farmers. And on the very day the second Congress opened Ethan Allen had led his Green Mountain Boys in an attack of Fort Ticonderga and had captured it. That June there was fought a fierce battle at a place called Bunker Hill in Massachusetts between some British troops and twelve thousand Americans called out by the local Committee of Safety.

Sitting with Jefferson as another delegate from Virginia was Colonel George Washington, head of Virginia's militia. He attended the session in uniform. When the Congress found itself definitely committed to a course of treason against England, with battles like that of Bunker Hill already a fact, it chose this colonel as the commander in chief of the Continental armies.

Jefferson's *Summary View* which had seemed too radical when he wrote it, now appeared to suit the situation very well indeed. So it is not surprising that in five days Jefferson found himself delegated to perform a very important and delicate task. He and John Dickinson were ordered to prepare an Address on the Cause of Taking Up Arms. The Congress was at last admitting that it would resist force by force. John Dickinson, like Jefferson, was a literary artist in legal matters. But otherwise the two committee members were nothing alike. Dickinson was cautious and conservative. When he saw Jeffer-

VII. THE DECLARATION

son's first draft of the Address, it was as if a red flag had been waved in front of a bull. No, sir, he would not permit it ! Why, this red-headed Virginian was egging the colonies on to Revolution !

So Dickinson rewrote the Address with milder, more conciliatory phrases. Only the last four paragraphs were left of Jefferson's fiery protests. The more radical members of the Congress, the patriots, however, had found their man in Jefferson. Here was one upon whom they could call to present their case in the most elegant style and yet in its truest, most advanced light. As the Congress went beyond the cautious policies of Dickinson, it relied more and more upon Jefferson's pen.

The answer to Lord North's propositions of conciliation was considered to be the most important task of Congress. Virginia's reply, as drawn up by Jefferson, was acknowledged to be the best model. So, when the committee for this particular task was selected, we find, as we expected, Jefferson's name together with Benjamin Franklin's, John Adams's, and Richard Henry Lee's. Franklin got the most votes, and Jefferson the most after him. He had leapt immediately into popularity with these Americans from all the thirteen colonies.

Lord North's proposals were rejected scornfully as insulting, misleading, and not in fact conciliatory at all. England still retained the *right* to tax whether she did so or not. She still imposed duties upon the colonies while she re-

THOMAS JEFFERSON

fused to allow them to trade with other countries than herself. The attacks upon Boston were inhumane. The answer was a more dignified expression of exactly what Virginia had wished to say.

On the first of August, the Congress being adjourned, Jefferson got into his carriage and made the ten-day journey home. He was just in time to bid good-by to his friend and kinsman John Randolph. John was going to England to live. He was a Tory and disapproved of the threatening Revolution against England. The next month Jefferson lived through still another family tragedy, this time the closest of them all. His baby daughter, aged one and a half years, died.

Congress met again in September, but it had been sitting three weeks before Jefferson could come back to Philadelphia. He was in Congress that December when the news came that the King had declared the American colonies in a state of rebellion and had accused them of seeking to establish an independent empire. Immediately after Christmas 1775 Jefferson left for home. There was work to be done in Virginia.

Jefferson was one of the greatest underground agitators of all time. He had a genius for organising great bodies of opinion for action by quiet, simple means. He could talk to influential friends and acquaintances logically and persuasively. He could write letters. In the meantime he collected money for gunpowder and con-

VII. THE DECLARATION

ducted the affairs of his Committee of Public Safety. He was now also head of the militia of Albemarle County. But his main business was to make Virginia prepared for the next decisive step of the united colonies.

When in May 1776 a convention was called in Virginia to consider the question of independence, the success of Jefferson's labours, and the labours of the men like him, became apparent. The Convention voted unanimously to instruct its delegates in Congress to declare the united colonies free and independent States. In Williamsburg the British flag over the State House was hauled down to make place for one with thirteen stripes.

As soon as he was sure of this vote, Jefferson hastened to Philadelphia to resume his seat. Virginia was safe; the next important work lay in Congress. This time Jefferson found his fellow Congressmen in a daring, fighting mood. They had now all caught up with John Adams and Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson. They had all read, as had nearly every person in the colonies who could read at all, a pamphlet that for boldness and fire quite eclipsed Jefferson's scholarly *Summary Views*.

While in London Benjamin Franklin had met a man named Thomas Paine, whom he persuaded to go to America, the land of opportunity. Paine had been in this country little more than a year he wrote *Common Sense*, a pamphlet that put the arguments for independence so simply, so tellingly, that there seemed to be no answer

THOMAS JEFFERSON

to it. This was in January 1776. Early in June, then, in obedience to the instructions they had received from home, the Virginia delegates proposed to the Continental Congress that a Declaration be drawn up stating that "these united colonies are and of right out to be free and independent." The motion was seconded by John Adams of Massachusetts.

In the great debate that followed it became evident that no one denied America's right to independence or even the fact that America was already independent. Was not the Congress at that very moment directing a successful war against England? But was it good policy to put the fact into words? Not all of the colonies were ripe for such a step. The middle colonies—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland—as well as South Carolina were still in "the half-way house of Dickinson," as Jefferson called it. But the public clamour for a statement of the colonies' rights to freedom had become so loud that Congress decided to draw up a Declaration at once, while it waited for the tardy colonies to catch up with the others. No time was lost in selecting a committee to write the Declaration. On it were John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, and Thomas Jefferson, who received the most votes. Jefferson, the legal artist, was selected to do the actual writing.

Just at this time Jefferson was wishing he could be in two places at once. For, perfectly certain that inde-

VII. THE DECLARATION

pendence would be declared, Virginia had decided to make itself a new constitution. But at a moment of such great historical significance Jefferson could not desert Philadelphia. Several of the Virginia delegates were hastening home, and to one of them, his old friend and teacher George Wythe, Jefferson entrusted a sketch of a constitution that he had dashed off.

When Wythe reached Williamsburg, he found the framers of the Virginia constitution had just accepted a document drawn up by James Madison and George Mason. However, they took Jefferson's preamble and tracked it on to their own work. This preamble included a list of reasons for separation from England, and it was really a sort of first draft to what Jefferson intended to put into the general Declaration of Independence. Now Jefferson began to write, to cut, to polish, to balance a composition that would become one of the most famous pieces of literature in the world. Later he had to alter a phrase that did not suit Adams, or put in an idea suggested by Franklin. Finally the paper was ready to be put on the table before Congress.

On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence as corrected. The greater part of the Declaration consists of specific wrongs committed against the colonies by the King and his government. But the most important, the best remembered and most quoted part consists of the short introduction to these grievances. For in this first part is the doctrine

THOMAS JEFFERSON

that a nation has at all times the right to change a government that does not suit it and that no longer performs the duties which a government should.

This was not only treason ; it was heresy. For despite the numerous changes of kings in England's own history, some of them accompanied by violence, it was still assumed that kings ruled by divine right, that they were given by God to the people to be obeyed. But the Declaration of Independence of new United States held that the purpose of a king, or of any government, was not to be obeyed but to provide for the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness of his subjects or its citizens. Any government that did not provide for these rights had no claim to be supported. Such a government was in itself criminal, and the crime that a government may commit upon its citizens is known as tyranny. Hence the long list of wrongs to prove to the rest of the world that King George's government had been tyrannous. The colonists withdrew their consent to be governed. It was a new doctrine of the *divine right of the governed*.

It is from this point of view that we must read the phrase, "all men are created equal." People may sometimes be heard to scoff at this phrase. Are all men of the same height or have they the same brain? Aren't some stronger, some wiser than others? But this cannot be what Jefferson, who was himself one of the wisest of his own day, meant. He meant that, in so far as all men are equally governed, so all governments receive their powers

VII. THE DECLARATION

from the consent of all men equally. If you and I have the same duties, must obey the same laws, then we must have the same rights and privileges. And among those are the rights to life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness.



Jefferson wrote a famous Religious Freedom Statute for Virginia, the first of its kind in the United States.

VIII. THE INNER REVOLUTION

The American colonies in signing Jefferson's document had declared themselves in revolt against Great Britain. Since England most certainly intended to put a stop to such rebellious nonsense, the Revolution meant War. This may be called the Outer Revolution, and the hero of this part of the Revolution is the soldier, George Washington.

But the Declaration spoke of the rights of human beings that no government could take away. It defined governments differently from what they actually were anywhere in the civilized world. It contained statements that could have been used to justify revolutions in every nation of Europe. In short, it was trying to bring about a

VIII. THE INNER REVOLUTION

revolution in men's minds. This may be called the Inner Revolution, and its heroes are the thinkers, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson. The thinker's revolution was to be Jefferson's lifelong task.

So now, the Continental Congress having completed its most important task, Jefferson's eyes turned once more to Virginia. He refused to be re-elected to the Congress. George Wythe followed his example. The two of them hastened home as fast as they could drive their horses. For the laws of Virginia were about to be rewritten. Now she was a free State. She had elected Patrick Henry her first Governor. Under the King it had been impossible to pass reforms through the House of Burgesses, now the House of Delegates. But in a revolution the minds of men are fluid and willing to accept change. Jefferson did not wish to make himself a dictator. He did not seek power for himself. He sought it for the people, so that their lives would be wider, freer, more self-reliant, and happier. The "esteem of the world" that he wanted so much was the honest gratitude of a free people. It may seem strange that Jefferson was more interested in the laws of Virginia than in those of the whole nation. But it must not be forgotten that the thirteen former colonies were not yet a nation by any means. Even after the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress was not making laws for all. Jefferson had been back in Virginia a month when he was informed that Congress had elected him, along with Silas Deane and Benjamin Franklin, to go to the French court to negotiate treaties of

THOMAS JEFFERSON

alliance and commerce with France. At the back of Jefferson's mind there had always persisted the hope that some day he would go abroad. For three days he kept the express waiting while he tried to make up his mind. Finally he decided against it. His wife's health was too poor to allow her to cross the ocean. Then, too, the battle over Virginia's legal reforms had just begun.

The legal revolution that Jefferson had in mind was not a task for any one man. He had to have friends, supporters, teachers, and disciples who had some of the qualities that he lacked.

There was nothing finer in Thomas Jefferson's life than his friendship with George Wythe. Jefferson considered him the best and most moral man he knew, and Wythe in turn idolized his former pupil. For public business, however, Wythe lacked two of Jefferson's most useful qualities: tact and patience. He could never conceal his annoyance at the opposition in a committee meeting. George Mason, another of Jefferson's elderly friends, and author of Virginia's constitution, resembled George Wythe in personal nobility, but his talents were more social. He was very handsome and cut a fine figure in a ballroom. Mason's Bill of Rights in Virginia's new constitution had served as one of Jefferson's models when he drew up the Declaration. Mason supplied the little group of staunch revolutionists with the fiery oratory it needed. Revolutions also need young men, who will carry on the work of mature men, just as mature men must

VIII. THE INNER REVOLUTION

base their work on the study and experience of older men. Jefferson's circle soon attracted the ideal young man for its purposes. This was James Madison, then twenty-five years old. Though not as brilliant in speech or in writing as some of the others, he was untiring and persistent, and his ideal of the patriot was Jefferson.

These men, then—Jefferson, Wythe, Mason, and Madison—were the centre of the movement to revolutionize Virginia's laws. Patrick Henry, and others as well, would sometimes join them to put through special measures, but these four men were constant in their aim to build up a democratic state. For, they felt, freeing the colonies from the English King was not the heart of the Revolution. States may be free and yet the people living in them be slaves. The real Revolution consisted in giving these people a democratic form of government such as Europe did not have. The people themselves must be allowed to decide in each case what best served their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

England was ruled by an aristocracy, and the aristocracy had its power, its wealth, and its social position in the ownership of large tracts of land. To keep the aristocracy limited to a small number of powerful people, the whole of each nobleman's estate together with his title, passed down intact to his eldest son. The other sons could shift for themselves. When the early settlers came to Virginia, it was natural that they should think of living under this same system. Land could be had

almost for the asking, and they carved out vast plantations for themselves in the Tidewater region. The huge grants of land passed from eldest son to eldest son. The Tories who opposed the Revolution came largely from this class of land-owners. Now Jefferson sat at once that the power of this class lay in the laws that protected their system of inheritance. He would much rather have seen America populated and governed by sturdy independent farms, with farms not so vast that they had to be cultivated by slaves. Besides, he considered the inheritance laws themselves very unjust.

If a man died without a will, everything went to his eldest son. This was called the law of primogeniture (*primo*—first; *genitura*—birth). Moreover, he could not always give his brothers any of his land even if he wanted to. For the land might be "entailed." This meant that by some provision of his great-grandfather's will, the land must always stay intact and could never be broken up. The heir must pass it on to *his* eldest son, at least as large as he had received it. The Virginians had gone the English one better by permitting Negro slaves to be entailed along with the land and houses. And, of course, the larger the estates grew under the system, the more did slaves become necessary. Jefferson's two measures, repealing the law of primogeniture and the law of entail met with the most bitter opposition. Jefferson's most serious opponent was Mr. Pendleton, who, though he had finally joined the Revolution against England, was otherwise firmly attached to the ancient order of things.

VIII. THE INNER REVOLUTION

Whenever the bills seemed finally about to pass, Pendleton would tack on an amendment which would turn their meaning upside down. He became such a nuisance to the radicals that they always referred to him as "Moderation" Pendleton. But Jefferson's patience was equal to Pendleton's and at last his measures were about to become a law. Hereafter, when a man died without leaving a will, his children would share the inheritance equally, and his dead hand would not prevent them from doing it as they pleased.

Jefferson's next concern was the naturalization of foreigners. His bill provided that any foreigner who desired to become a citizen of Virginia could do so after two years' residence by declaring in court his intention of living in the State thereafter. The wife of a naturalized citizen became a citizen with him, and so did his children who were under age. All minors who migrated to Virginia without father or mother became citizens without any legal steps when they came of age.

America had always been an asylum for Europeans dissatisfied with their home countries or persecuted in them, and Jefferson meant to see that Virginia at least would keep this noble purpose forever. The bill was easily passed.

The next great battle was not won with such ease. For Jefferson and his friends now set about establishing religious freedom, an idea so new and advanced

that to many people it seemed shocking, if not blasphemous.

Most American colonies become more or less accustomed to religious *tolerance*, that is, people were allowed to profess whatever religion they chose without being considered criminals. They could worship in their own churches in their own way. But they did not always have religious *freedom*. Now, as a matter of fact, Virginia did not even have religious tolerance. The Southerners were not Puritans. Their church was Episcopalian, or "Church of England." There were pretty strict laws about attending church on Sunday, but once the service—not too long—was over, your duty was done and you could do what you pleased with the rest of the day. But not belonging to the established religion was quite a different matter. It meant persecution both under the law and beyond it. Only half of those residing in Virginia really belonged to the established church, yet all paid it taxes equally. Furthermore, to be legally wed one had to be married by an Episcopalian minister.

"It does me no injury," Jefferson said, "for my neighbour to say there are twenty Gods or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg. Is uniformity of opinion desirable? No more than face or stature. Millions of innocent men, women, and children since the introduction of Christianity have been burnt, tortured, fined, and imprisoned, yet we have not advanced one inch toward uniformity. The effect of this coercion has been

VIII. THE INNER REVOLUTION

to make one half of the world fools and the other half hypocrites."

Practically all the Burgesses were Episcopalians, but the moderates were willing to go half way with Jefferson in his desire to remove all religious restrictions and disabilities. They admitted, for instance, that it was unfair to tax people for a church they did not belong to. Why not, they said, let people specify which churches they wished their taxes to go to? Would that not be religious freedom? But Jefferson said No. Any bargaining might some day be used as a basis for religious persecution. Religion and religious support must be made purely voluntary. For eight years this struggle continued. At last, when Jefferson was in France, Mason and Madison got his bill for the establishment of religious freedom passed. Later this principle of absolute religious freedom was inserted into the Constitution of the United States as the first amendment of the Bill of Rights, chiefly through the efforts of James Madison. There were during the Revolution about 250,000 slaves in Virginia. Jefferson himself owned more than a hundred and fifty. He had never bought any; they came to him with his father's and his wife's estates.

When Jefferson first became a Burgess under a royal Governor, he had begun to work against the slave system. His first cautious proposal was a measure permitting freed slaves to live in Virginia. The measure was defeated. Jefferson had then decided that nothing progressive could

THOMAS JEFFERSON

be done about slavery as long as a king still ruled the country. So, when Jefferson was writing the Declaration of Independence, he included among the crimes of the King the charge that he had obstructed the colonists' attempts to limit the system of slavery. But he discovered that many colonists thought exactly as did the King's governors on this matter. He was, much to his annoyance, forced to cross out this charge.

But the Declaration still stated that all men were created free and equal, and this is one of the few countries in the world where slavery was permitted! At first Jefferson wanted to attack the problem directly at its heart by simply having slavery abolished. But Jefferson's friends pointed out many circumstances that made such a forthright step as abolition seem impossible. First there was the opposition of the Virginia planters. At a time when in some regions the slaves outnumbered the whites two to one, it was a dangerous proceeding suddenly to free them. The process should be more gradual. Mason wanted the Negroes to be educated before they were freed, and thought that their masters should be obliged to prepare them for liberty. Finally, Jefferson's own former experiences with the slavery question convinced him that the only sure way of abolishing slavery was to get the slaves actually out of the country. For he thought that the people who had once been slaves would never be allowed to live in peace side by side with people who had once been their masters.

VIII. THE INNER REVOLUTION

In the end Jefferson worked out an elaborate plan. All Negro children who were born from now on were to be free and to belong to no one but their parents. These children were to stay with their parents until they were old enough to be trained in a trade. Then at public expense they would be taught farming, handicrafts, or science according to their ability. When the boys were twenty-one and the girls eighteen, they were to be supplied with tools, seed, cows, horses, and fire-arms and be sent to some suitable colony, preferably in Africa. This colony was then to be declared a free nation by the American government. Finally, at the same time, America would be sending out ships to Europe to bring free white colonists to take the place of the slaves. But Jefferson's every attack on the slave problem came up against the stone wall of the planters' opposition. It was not until 1782 that Jefferson's original measure, permitting freed slaves to live in Virginia, was pushed through by Madison, after a compromise. The act now read that an owner might free a slave if he guaranteed that the freedman would not become a public charge. In eight years this act resulted in the freeing of ten thousand slaves.

As for the larger plan, which if enacted might have saved this country from the Civil War, it did not even start to take place until 1822, when James Monroe, a friend and pupil of Jefferson's, was President of the United States. In that year Jehudi Ashmun brought some freed slaves to the West Coast of Africa, where they started

THOMAS JEFFERSON

the nation of Liberia. But by now it was too late, for the cotton gin had been invented and slaves had become much too valuable to be allowed to go free.

In the ideal state which Jefferson was now trying to help build in Virginia, everyone capable of learning at all must be educated, be he rich or poor. How else could the citizens understand their rights, be able to maintain them, and exercise with intelligence their parts in self-government? Jefferson therefore laid out a plan for public schooling that covered the whole system of education. Each county was to be divided up into wards five or six miles square. Each ward was to support a school and a teacher with taxes collected from people who owned property, whether they had children or not. This is exactly how our modern schools are supported. Each child, rich or poor, was entitled to attend this school to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. Then in different parts of the State there were to be established twenty "grammar schools," which would teach Greek, Latin, geography, and advanced arithmetic, very much like our high schools. The brightest student from each ward school was to be sent to a grammar school on a scholarship. After a two years' trial, the brightest of these students were to be continued at advanced courses in the grammar school.

At the end of six years, half of the students were to be dismissed, some of them to become grammar and ward school teachers. The other half would be sent to William

VIII. THE INNER REVOLUTION

and Mary for a three-year course in whatever sciences they chose. Thus the brightest boys would be educated entirely by the State. Jefferson's educational proposals were adopted only after many years, and then only piecemeal, and never in their entirety. In 1796 Jefferson's friends finally managed to get passed that part of his education bill dealing with lowest grade schools, but only with an amendment that made it quite worthless. The amendment left it to the magistrates of each county to decide whether they should have ward schools or not. As the magistrates were the big land-owners of the counties and as the cost of education was to be borne by the wealthy classes (who had private tutors for their own children), very few ward schools were established.

Now that there was no king, no court, no English Parliament to look after Virginia's laws, everyone realized that some revisions would have to be made in the present statutes. For this task of adapting the old code of laws to a republican form of government, the Virginia legislature selected their three best writers of laws: Thomas Jefferson, George Wythe, and Edmund Pendleton.

Jefferson was given the most ancient British laws to remodel, those that were older than the founding of the colony of Virginia. Wythe took the British laws up to the Declaration of Independence. And Pendleton was put in charge of the laws passed by Virginia herself.

Jefferson saw that the first big sweeping reform would

THOMAS JEFFERSON

have to do with the death penalty. For life was cheap in the English law of those days, much cheaper than a little property, and men were sometimes hanged for so small a crime as stealing a loaf of bread. Jefferson, Wythe, and Pendleton, for once unanimous, recommended the abolition of the death penalty for all crimes except murder and high treason. But it took the legislature eleven years to make this recommendation law.

In going over the ancient laws Jefferson was forcibly reminded of the difficult time he and Dabney Carr had had as students in following the involved language of "old Coke." He therefore determined that, while he was rewriting these laws, he might as well cast them into as simple and clear a style as he was capable of. Wythe joined him in this. Students of the law in Virginia today have Jefferson to thank if their studies are somewhat easier than elsewhere.

The "Revised Laws" were put before the Assembly in the form of 126 separate bills. As usual the faithful Madison took up the colossal task of getting them passed: By plugging and hammering away he managed in six years to get 56 of them adopted.



Jefferson On War Front

IX. WARTIME GOVERNOR

While Jefferson and his friends were fighting to make their country a better place to live in for future citizens, the news that poured in from the various battle fronts was disheartening enough. But late in 1777 there came the joyous surprise of Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga. This great news had among other things two important results for our story. First, it brought France in as an ally of the young republic. Secondly, four thousand prisoners of war were sent to be quartered in Virginia.

The troops with their officers who were encamped in Albemarle County, within sight of Monticello, included many Hessians. Jefferson saw them arrive after seven hundred miles of dreary march, and he was struck with

THOMAS JEFFERSON

pity for the dismal condition and prospects of these men, mostly impressed soldiers whose hearts were not in their task. Among the German officers, who had no cause to bear the revolutionary colonies ill-will, were men of true European culture, and soon the Jeffersons had formed many delightful new acquaintances in the neighbourhood. He threw open to the officers his gardens, his house, his library. Even General Phillips, commander of the English prisoners, whom Jefferson described as the proudest man of the proudest nation, entered into the spirit of neighbourliness. Acknowledging Jefferson's politeness he sent him the following invitation: "The British officers intend to perform a play next Saturday at the Barracks. I shall be extremely happy to have the honour to attend you and Mrs. Jefferson in my box at the theatre should you or that lady be inclined to go." Jefferson wrote a friend: "It is for the benefit of mankind to mitigate the horrors of war as much as possible. The practice, therefore, of modern nations, of treating captive enemies with politeness and generosity, is not only delightful in contemplation, but really interesting to all the world—friends, foes, and neutral."

In 1779 Thomas Jefferson became Governor of Virginia. That State then embraced much more territory than it does now. It extended as far west as the Mississippi and included all the land that we now call Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, and a great part, besides, of what is now Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. In other ways, too, Virginia was practically a nation in its own right.

IX. WARTIME GOVERNOR

It could borrow money on its own account, and, two days after Jefferson's inauguration, Virginia ratified a treaty with France, quite as though it were an independent power.

The alliance with France had a few undesirable consequences as well as many good ones. For one thing there was a change of spirit on both sides. Now that France was to send over troops, volunteering on this side dropped off. There was not now such a feeling of desperate need as there had been.

On the other hand this alliance made the English more ruthless. Now they feared that the colonies would become French possessions, they fought harder and also went more systematically about the business of laying waste the land. Burgoyne's surrender had to be made up for, and the South, since it was less populated, seemed more easy to conquer.

Now the British were coming up from the south through North Carolina. Jefferson determined to keep them out of Virginia at all costs. To do this he had to put all his hopes in General Gates, who was opposing the English army in North Carolina. He sent Gates all the resources in men and ammunition he could spare.

But many Virginians looked on with anxiety as Virginia's means of defense poured into the Carolinas. Virginian soldiers should be fighting Virginia's battles,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

that is, in Virginia, they thought. While still straining every resource to send Gates supplies, Jefferson received the dreadful news that the Americans had been disastrously defeated at Camden, South Carolina. In one battle all the materials that Virginia had spent two months in collecting were lost to the enemy. All their sacrifices had been in vain. The British would now invade Virginia. Jefferson's critics raised a louder murmur.

Fortunately for Jefferson's peace of mind, the Virginian forces had carried out at least one successful campaign. In accordance with the new British plan of wasting the South, a British general named Hamilton had spent the winter of 1779 persuading the chiefs of some Indian tribes to attack the Americans. The Indians took no prisoners, preferring scalps, and, of course, drew no sharp lines between soldiers and civilians, men and women. Colonel George Rogers Clark, a former neighbour of Jefferson's, had been sent into the western forests with a tiny army of 130 frontiersmen to take Hamilton. Though the feat seemed incredible Clark actually did surprise and capture Hamilton with all his white forces early in the spring. Hamilton and two other officers were brought to Williamsburg, the others released on parole. From now on Virginia did not have to guard its western frontier against invasion. It could turn its whole energies to stopping the British army advancing in the south.

Meanwhile, the victorious British in the Carolinas were taking several months to reach the Virginia border.

IX. WARTIME GOVERNOR

Again and again they were checked by guerrilla troops. At the same time Virginia was being threatened on a new front. A dozen armed vessels had anchored in Chesapeake Bay. They landed troops. Virginia held its breath, but nothing happened. These ships had been ordered to wait for Cornwallis, and the Carolina guerrillas were keeping Cornwallis away. The ships set sail again after waiting more than a month. No sooner did Virginia seem safe again than a messenger galloped into the capital to say that twenty-seven warships had been sighted entering Chesapeake Bay. The messenger had not waited to make out what flags the ships flew. This was Sunday, December 21, 1780. It was not until Tuesday that the Governor learned that the ships were British, and that they were making their way up the James. Instantly Jefferson called out the militia and gave orders to remove all war supplies to a point above Richmond, where the James was not navigable because of rapids.

Thursday evening the Governor received news that the British troops under the renegade Benedict Arnold had landed. Jefferson found himself alone, all the members of the government being away on duty or engaged in removing their families from danger. There was not in Virginia a military force large enough to stop Arnold's troops. And Jefferson himself was no soldier.

Sending his own family to a relative in Tuckahoe, he mounted a horse and raced to superintend the transportation of the war supplies across the river for some

THOMAS JEFFERSON

hours ; then at midnight he galloped off to Tuckahoe to see that his family was safely put across the river. At daylight man and horse, both tired and unfed, galloped back to supervise the transport of the last stores from Richmond across the James. Just before reaching Richmond Jefferson discovered that it was already in the hands of the enemy, and turned off just in time to follow the stores. Then he hunted up Baron von Steuben's camp to get the advice of the only trained commander within reach.

Arnold was in Richmond trying to cripple the town in the shortest possible time by raiding and burning. Meanwhile, the Virginia militia was massing around him. Luckily for Arnold, the wind shifted, so that he could board his ships, sail down the river and away. The raid was over.

Jefferson had been in the saddle for three and a half days when he rode into Richmond on the heels of Benedict Arnold. He must now take up a job that was as little to his liking as a task could well be. For from this time on Jefferson was virtually a military dictator. All civil government had practically ceased to exist.

Virginia was now harried on all sides. To the east Benedict Arnold was pillaging the State in spite of Steuben's and Lafayette's attempts to check him. To the south Cornwallis and Tarleton had at last burst across the border and were sweeping northward. In the western

IX. WARTIME GOVERNOR

countries the Indians were again on the warpath, it was said. Finally the British fleet swooped down unexpectedly here and there on the coast.

In response to repeated calls for help Washington had at last sent "the boy Lafayette" to Virginia. This youthful major general had already been in America four years before he entered Richmond in March 1781. From their first meeting Jefferson and Lafayette became dear and lifelong friends.

Hurriedly the legislature met and empowered the Governor to call out the militia, to confiscate wagons, horses, food, equipment, clothing, and Negroes. He was also to arrest disloyal Tories. He was to issue money. In short, the man who had fought with every weapon to make men free was given such tyrannical powers as no royal Governor had ever enjoyed.

Four times in Jefferson's second term of office the legislature had to flee before the enemy. First in January 1781 when Arnold sacked Richmond; then in March; and then again in May, when the enemy armies were so close that the few members who were left decided after that to meet in Charlottesville near Monticello. From there they were again forced to leave by the arrival of General Tarleton and his white dragoons. Jefferson himself barely escaped capture. On June 1st Jefferson's term as Governor was up. But because of the constant danger, there were never enough legislators gathered

THOMAS JEFFERSON

together at any one time to permit of a legal vote. The month of May passed ; Virginia was without a governor.

When the dispersed legislature finally met together again on June 7, the members were irritable and nervous. They had to have someone to blame, and it was only natural that Jefferson should come in for a good share of spite.

Hadn't they told him not to send all their supplies and men to General Gates in the Carolinas ? Now, see where they were, harried on four sides by the foe. The legislators who were busily crying, " I told you so," were now joined by the older enemies of Jefferson, the conservatives, the men who had fought against the abolition of the entail, who hated him for winning religious liberty for Virginia. George Nicholas, a young representative from Jefferson's own county of Albemarle, rose up and accused the former Governor of failing in his duty by allowing Benedict Arnold to terrorize the State. Jefferson's friends jumped to his defense. But Jefferson himself was profoundly shocked. It seemed so obvious to him that in the thirteen years he had been in public service, he had always worked for the State's best interests both in the present and the future. Amazed and hurt, he got a friend to secure from Nicholas a list of the formal charges the latter intended to bring against him. Through the same friend he sent Nicholas the answers he intended to make. Then he retired to the country to brood over the ingratitude of his State. Before he retired for good,

IX. WARTIME GOVERNOR

as he thought, he answered one more challenge to his principles and did his State one more service. At this last meeting of the legislature one party began to agitate for a dictator. "The very thought," said Jefferson, "was treason against the people, was treason against mankind in general." He united his friends, who were still in the majority, to defeat the project.

He knew, however, that what the country needed at its head in these warlike times was, if not a dictator, at least a soldier, but one legally elected. So he turned his last political efforts to the election of General Nelson as his own successor.

General Nelson had been one of the mainstays of Jefferson's administration. He supported it with his name, his military talents, and money from his vast estates. When he was elected, he went very conscientiously about his task of being a military emergency Governor. Virginia had a taste of the dictatorship it seemed to want.

Nelson forced men into the army, impressed wagons, horses, slaves, and supplies. But he succeeded in pleasing his countrymen no better than the previous Governor, although he had sacrificed health and fortune for them. After holding his office six months, he threw it up and he, too, went before the Assembly to answer charges made against him.

In the meantime Jefferson was still on his wife's estate,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Poplar Forest, in Bedford County, waiting for the Assembly to convene again. Then he would go to face his accusers, answer them, and retire to private life permanently, never to accept public office again.

In August, Lafayette brought Jefferson a letter from the President of the Continental Congress. It contained exciting news: Jefferson had been appointed to represent the young United States abroad. But he could not go until he had personally answered those accusations. He declined the offer.

Before the legislature met again, the war was over. Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown. Virginia was free of its invaders; it was deliriously happy; it did not remember petty grudges. When, a month later, in November, Jefferson ran for the Assembly in Albemarle County, he was elected without a dissenting vote.

Grimly Jefferson rose up in his place. The House would be pleased to remember that accusations against him had been hinted at the last session. Would the members in question please repeat the accusations? He was prepared to meet and answer them.

There was no reply. George Nicholas had purposely stayed away. After a silence, Jefferson calmly read off the points as he had received them through his friend. Then he answered them point by point. He sat down.

IX. WARTIME GOVERNOR

Immediately another member stood up and offered a resolution thanking Jefferson for his "impartial, upright, and attentive administration." It was passed unanimously by both Council and Assembly.

But at the next meeting of the House, Jefferson did not appear. True to his vow, he had returned to Monticello, determined to spend the rest of his life as a private citizen. The friends who had been indignant at the treatment Jefferson had received at the hands of political adversaries, were now becoming indignant at Jefferson's own pride and exaggerated sensitivity. They knew how important he was to them and to their plans for a democratic republic. They did not hesitate to chide him to his face. James Monroe wrote directly to Jefferson and told him what the people were saying. Jefferson answered him that he had examined his heart and was convinced that every fiber of political ambition had been torn out. The disapproval of men who had worked with him and had known his aims was a shock for which he had not been prepared. "I felt," he ends the letter, "that these injuries had inflicted a wound on my spirit which only will be cured by the all-healing grave."

George Nicholas, some time later, published a letter containing a handsome apology. Now Jefferson was left with almost no excuse for sulking in his retirement.



In becoming a gentleman farmer, Jefferson was fulfilling one of his two ideals.

X. RETURN TO BATTLE

What fortified Thomas Jefferson in his resolve to stay out of politics was the fun he got out of being home. There were so many interests he had had no time for while at Philadelphia and Williamsburg and during the feverish two years of his governorship.

First and foremost among these hobbies was the completion of Monticello and its grounds.

In becoming a gentleman farmer, Jefferson was fulfilling one of his two ideals of the completely satisfactory life. His second ideal was the life of the scientist. Already in his college days Jefferson had learned from Professor Small to prefer exact information to hazy general state-

X. RETURN TO BATTLE

ments. So for five years he had kept a very close account of the amount of rain that fell in the neighbourhood, the coldest temperature and the hottest as revealed by the thermometer, and the direction the winds blew. Even now at Monticello Jefferson recorded the appearance and disappearance of snow and ice, of the leaves of the different trees, of the buds and fruits of the orchards, of the ticks and fireflies, and of many birds. He observed the day of the year that each of the vegetables and fruits and berries reached his table.

All this information went into notebooks. Every conceivable fact of interest about Virginia that Jefferson ever heard had gone into those notebooks. Every observation that might be useful to himself or his neighbours he jotted down. So thorough was Jefferson's description of the natural resources, the products, the inhabitants, the boundaries, and the laws and customs of his State that, without intending it, he became America's first real geographer.

Since the birth of her second child Mrs. Jefferson had never quite regained her strength, growing weaker and weaker with time. On September 6, 1782, she lost her long dreary fight for life. Mrs. Jefferson left, besides her namesake Martha, two other little daughters—Mary, who was four, and Lucy Elizabeth, an infant. Thomas Jefferson promised himself to be both father and mother to them. He hoped to heal his grief for Martha by caring for her children.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The country's affairs were now being run by the Congress established by the Articles of Confederation, which had finally been ratified in 1781. While still at Amphill, Jefferson received word from this Congress that he had been appointed a minister and was to go to Paris to help Benjamin Franklin and John Jay conclude the final treaty of peace with England. Jefferson's friends, knowing of his wife's death, now hoped that he would be willing to return to public life.

As a matter of fact, Jefferson was more than willing. He was eager. Here was an opportunity to lose himself in hard work and important services.

It was midwinter when Jefferson hurried to Baltimore to embark on the French frigate that was to take him abroad. But he found the frigate frozen in the ice, and the English fleet still blockading the harbour. Before these difficulties were overcome, the belated mails arrived with the news that the first draft of the peace treaty had already been signed. Jefferson wasn't needed. Was he destined never to see France?

Jefferson returned to Monticello. There he spent a dismal summer. He worked hard as usual but he no longer took any joy in his work.

In the meantime, Jefferson's friends were still busy at getting him back into the thick of politics. That summer he was chosen to represent Virginia at the

X. RETURN TO BATTLE

Congress of the Confederation. His duties began in November.

One of the Congress's pressing tasks was to establish a money system for the new nation. It was natural at first to think of adopting the British system of coinage. Four farthings make one penny, twelve pennies make one shilling, twenty shillings make a sovereign or one pound ; besides which, twenty-one shillings make a guinea, two shillings make a florin, and two and a half shillings make a half crown. At the thought of this jumble, Jefferson and several others threw up their hands in dismay. Here was a brand-new republic starting from scratch—why not create a sensible system while they had the chance ?

When Gouverneur Morris proposed the decimal system we now have, Jefferson immediately agreed with him. This meant that each coin could be reckoned in terms of the other coins by tens. Ten mills make one cent ; ten cents make one dime ; ten dimes make one dollar ; ten dollars make one eagle ; and so on. The Spanish dollar was made the basis of American currency. The word *mill* comes from the Latin and means a thousandth ; the word *cent* means a hundredth ; and *dime* means a tenth.

The most important work done by Jefferson at this Congress was the plan he drew up for the government of the Northwest Territory, which had been surrendered by Virginia to the Confederacy. First of all his plan proposed that all territory now owned or later to be

THOMAS JEFFERSON

acquired by the United States should be divided up into States. This provided a framework for the growth of the country. It made expansion a national instead of a State question. It prevented the creation of two different kinds of citizens, some belonging to States and some to the United States only. Jefferson obviously had at the back of his mind a dream of a vast empire, composed of many great States, closely bound up together.

Furthermore, Jefferson's plan provided for the government of these territories before they became States. The inhabitants might create their own temporary governments as long as they fulfilled two conditions. First, these governments must be republican in form and must admit no person to citizenship who held a hereditary title. Secondly, after the year 1800 there should be no slavery in any of this territory.

Finally, any part of this territory could be admitted into the union as a State "on an equal footing" with the original thirteen, as soon as it had as many free inhabitants as the least populous of those original thirteen States.

When Jefferson presented this plan to Congress, it was adopted and ratified—but only after a little amendment had been inserted which removed the conditions about hereditary titles and slavery. In spite of these changes, the adoption of Jefferson's plan for the treatment of United States territories makes him the father of the American system of State-making. It is thanks to him

X. RETURN TO BATTLE

that a citizen of California is precisely the same kind of American citizen as the citizen of Massachusetts.

The last great task Jefferson engaged in while at the Congress was also intended to unite and strengthen the new republic. He proposed that ministers be sent to all the European nations to negotiate commercial treaties. Europe should learn to look upon the United States as a single nation. Jefferson drew up a list of "Instructions" for American ambassadors at all foreign capitals. They contained not only rules for making commercial treaties but also a set of regulations for the more humane conduct of wars. American ministers were to try to get all the European governments to pledge themselves to follow these regulations.

Jefferson's regulations forbade privateering, the molesting of neutrals, and the injuring of farmers, fishermen, or other civilians. There was to be no confiscation of property, no crowding of prisoners into unhealthy places, no ravaging of seacoasts. War, in short, was to be kept purely a matter of armies, of soldiers and sailors.

These "Instructions" were adopted whole-heartedly.



Jefferson became envoy to France. He liked French people but he disliked the pomp of the Royal Court.

XI. FRANCE

On the day that Congress adopted Jefferson's "Instructions" for ministers abroad it also appointed him a sort of roving minister to Europe. His duties would be to explain his document to Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, who were already in Paris, and to aid them in drawing up new treaties.

On July 5, 1784, the day after the eighth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the vessel *Ceres* set out from Boston. On board were Mr. Thomas Jefferson and his daughter Mistress Martha, on a mission to the court of France.

The Jeffersons first took lodgings in Paris so that they

XI. FRANCE

might get acquainted with the city before they settled down for good. Then her father put Martha in one of the famous convent schools to finish her education as a lady. Later he sent for his second daughter Polly and placed her in the same school.

In Paris Jefferson was very busy indeed. First he had to explain to Franklin and Adams the new instructions for making treaties, including the new rules of warfare. Then the three ministers had to draw up special treaties to send to the many different courts of Europe. Most of this work was carried on in Franklin's home at Passy, a suburb of Paris.

Soon the three American diplomats had worked out a model treaty based upon Jefferson's "Instructions." Franklin struck off some copies on his own little printing press and sent them around to the French statesmen.

The first to sign the treaty with America was Frederick the Great of Prussia. Negotiations were started with Denmark and with Tuscany. Then Franklin finally received his permission to go home, and Jefferson was made ambassador in his place.

With Franklin gone home and Adams sent to England as American minister to that country, Jefferson became both ambassador and consul at Paris. That is, he took care not only of all diplomatic matters but also commercial ones.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Early in 1786 Jefferson received an encouraging message from London. England, wrote John Adams, seems at last ready to enter into a friendly treaty with her former colonies. Would Jefferson join Adams in London and help carry it through? Jefferson was delighted at the prospect of winning back the friendship of the mother country. He hastened to London, where the two American ambassadors quickly drew up a brief treaty.

Coming from his kindly, warm-hearted Paris, Jefferson was shocked at the treatment he found Adams subjected to. "On my presentation, as usual, to the King and Queen at their levees," he wrote later, "it was impossible for anything to be more ungracious than their notice of Mr. Adams and myself." To the Americans' proposals the Minister of Foreign Affairs was cold, condescending, and evasive. He never seemed to be able to grant them their requests for an interview, always having pressing engagements at the time.

After seven weeks of this cool contempt, Jefferson gave up and returned to his French home. Jefferson therefore sympathized with the French ministers when they complained that American trade went mostly to England, despite the fact that France was a better friend to the United States than was Great Britain. But France, Jefferson had to reply, had a very high tariff against imported goods. Americans could not sell their goods in France, and hence they could not afford to buy there. He urged the French to try out lower tariffs and even

XI. FRANCE

free trade. He himself became quite convinced of the superiority of free trade over tariffs.

Jefferson kept a constant stream of information flowing from France to America. Four colleges—Yale, Harvard, William and Mary, and the College of Philadelphia—received letters from him regularly on any new inventions and discoveries that he might have come across or heard of. He even suggested lists of books that he thought should be included in their libraries. Out of gratitude for these services Yale sent him an honorary degree in 1786 and a year later Harvard did the same. He was the first to send to America news of the success of Watt's steam engine "by which a peck and a half of coal performs as much work as horse in a day." He became excited, along with the rest of France, over the new experiments with balloons, and studied the new science of aeronautics.

One day while walking in the country near Paris Jefferson fell on his right hand and broke his wrist. It turned out to be a compound fracture, that is, the broken bone had been driven into the flesh, and it was never properly set by the surgeon. Jefferson's right wrist was ever after stiff and weak. It remained to the end of his life a handicap that he never quite overcame. It stopped the violin playing for good, but he learned in time to write with his left hand almost as well as with his right.



America sent France 35,000 barrels of flour as a result of Jefferson's appeal.

XII. THE FAMILY ABROAD

Events of tremendous importance were taking place in France. The Revolution had really started.

The winter of 1788-89 had been a frightful one in Paris, and the news from the rest of France was no better. The country was in the grip of a depression. There was such a shortage of bread that among the aristocracy it became the smart thing for invited dinner guests to bring their own along with them.

Jefferson wrote a letter to America, which was published in the papers, asking for flour. America sent France 35,000 barrels of flour as a result of this appeal.

XII. THE FAMILY ABROAD

In French eyes, the writer of the Declaration of Independence was the great apostle of the religion of liberty. He was not simply a theorist, a man who talked large ideas ; he was a practical statesman, a man who had drafted Virginia's Bill of Religious Freedom and had drawn up a complete plan for public education.

Liberals and reformers like Lafayette therefore thought it a great piece of good luck that Jefferson should be present at what promised to be the dawn of a new era in the history of France. But sympathetic though Jefferson might be with Lafayette's political friends, and willing to give them the help they expected, he had after all been sent by his own government to the King of France, and it would be poor return for the hospitality he had received to aid in plots against the King's government.

On the other hand, Jefferson was very much indebted to Lafayette. After his visit to the United States in 1784, Lafayette had returned to become the protector of American interests in France. Now he was turning to Jefferson for encouragement and advice. How could Jefferson refuse him ? Once, for instance, the Marquis asked if he could bring a little party of eight men to Jefferson's house for dinner. When these nine Frenchmen sat down at Jefferson's table, they turned out to be members of the new Patriot Party who had come together to decide whether representatives to the new assembly ought to be elected or hereditary, and whether the King should

THOMAS JEFFERSON

be allowed to veto the laws they passed. Afterwards Jefferson was afraid that in taking part, even silently, in such a seditious gathering he had not observed the proper etiquette for a Minister of the United States. So he went to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs and referred very delicately to what he had done. But it seemed that the Foreign Minister knew all about it and quite approved.

Again, in July 1789, at the supreme moment of the Revolution, when the Estates General had met to decide the future of the nation, this body paid homage to Jefferson. For the committee it had appointed to draft a constitution called on this foreigner to sit in at its sessions and favour it with his advice. This honour, too, Jefferson had to decline for diplomatic reasons.

Just about this time President Washington finally sent Jefferson permission to come home for a six months' vacation. By the time the news of this had reached Jefferson and he could get ready and find a ship for America, the months of July, August, and September slipped by. In these months the Revolution was in full swing. Jefferson wanted to stay, but go he must. In any case he intended to be back soon.



Thomas Jefferson wanted the U.S. Government to guarantee free speech, free press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and trial by jury in *all* cases.

XIII. A REPUBLICAN COURT

A few days before Jefferson's ship left Le Havre, the first President of the United States named him the first Secretary of State.

Jefferson did not receive the official appointment until he landed in Norfolk. His first impulse was simply to refuse the honour. France was on the edge of great events, and it would be a pity not to be there when they happened. But Jefferson finally let himself be convinced that his country needed him more in New York than it did in Paris. In the middle of February 1790 he formally accepted the post. His daughter, Mademoiselle Martha, was to be married the next week to her cousin, Thomas Mann Randolph. Shortly after the wedding Jefferson

THOMAS JEFFERSON

left Monticello to take up his duties in New York, then the capital of the Federal government. At Philadelphia he stopped and visited Franklin. The old man, shockingly thin but cheerful as ever, was confined to his bed. A month later Jefferson was very glad he had had this talk with his old friend. America's wisest citizen was dead.

During Jefferson's absence in France, his disciple Madison had become the foremost man in the House of Representatives. There was therefore no better man to tell Jefferson what had happened at the Constitutional Convention, what problems had been solved, and which still awaited solution.

When Jefferson, in Paris, had first heard of the proceedings of the Convention, he had been very suspicious of the "bundle of compromises" it had turned out as a Constitution. He thought too much power was being given to a President, who might be re-elected over and over again, and not enough to the people's Representatives. And where was the citizen's protection against the sort of tyranny the Revolution had been fought over? He wrote to Madison suggesting that, after a certain number of States had accepted the Constitution, the others should hold out against adoption until a Bill of Rights had been included. Jefferson wanted the United States Government solemnly to bind itself never to permit certain acts. It should guarantee free speech, free press, freedom of assembly, freedom of

XIII. A REPUBLICAN COURT

religion, and trial by jury in *all* cases. He also wanted to see standing armies and monopolies, or trusts, forbidden.

Most of these ideas were also being fought or at home by George Mason and others. Eventually Madison got the first session of Congress to pass the first ten amendments to the Constitution as the nation's Bill of Rights. But even before this, Jefferson had been won over to thinking that the Constitutional Convention had done as well as might be expected.

To Jefferson, fresh from a country that was always singing the praises of America's "republican simplicity," the most striking feature of American society was its growing snobbishness. As Secretary of State Jefferson was invited out to homes that were considered the "best society," and these he discovered were the homes of old Tories. Before Jefferson's arrival, this clique of "best people" had been ridiculously excited over the title to be used in addressing Mr. Washington. All the titles of the princes of Europe were closely examined. Even Vice President John Adams was horrified that the Chief Executive of this country should be addressed simply as "Mr. President." But Madison, as Speaker of the House of Representatives, made the dry suggestion that Adams read the Constitution, where Mr. Washington's title was plainly given—"President of the United States."

It was Hamilton's idea to keep the President as

THOMAS JEFFERSON

inaccessible to the people as was the King of England. Now and then Washington might invite important personages to dinner, but on such occasions he was not to remain long at the table. Senators, since they were the American substitute for a House of Lords, could speak to the President face to face, but not mere Representatives, and certainly no foreigner with a rank lower than that of Ambassador. Jefferson did not like all this royalism. A nation based on the Declaration of Independence had no business acting as did the society of New York and Philadelphia. Jefferson's opinions were far from popular among America's new would-be aristocrats. Though they could not have titles, they could still pride themselves on their wealth. It was this early in our history that there began to show itself what others have always accused Americans of having as a religion—the worship of wealth.

The high priest of this vigorous little religion was Alexander Hamilton, Washington's Secretary of the Treasury. Born in the West Indies, as a boy Hamilton had always dreamed of becoming a great general. When he was fifteen, a hurricane swept the island of St. Croix. Hamilton wrote such a brilliant account of it for a newspaper that a public subscription was taken up to send this young genius to America to be educated. When the Revolution broke out, he was a student at King's College, now Columbia University. At seventeen he wrote some very popular pamphlets in favour of the colonies and at nineteen he became a lieutenant colonel and aide to General Washington. Hamilton was so good

XIII. A REPUBLICAN COURT

at composition that Washington kept him as his secretary, though the boy begged for a command in the field. This was not given to him until the battle of Yorktown.

After the peace treaty Hamilton served as a member of the first Congress, but his duties soon convinced him that the United States had an unsatisfactory form of government. He became one of the leaders in calling together the Constitutional Convention. Later he worked like a Titan to have the Constitution adopted, though he privately considered it a rather spineless affair.

In the first place he did not think the Federal government centralized enough. He wanted the President and Senators elected for life. The President was to have more powers than even King George was unsuccessfully asking for. He thought the Governors of the various States should be appointed by the President and the Senate. Only men of property should have the vote. Offered the post of Secretary of the Treasury, Hamilton accepted the position eagerly. He threw himself into the work, took on a great number of tasks, and soon began to consider himself a sort of prime minister.

This was the man who met Jefferson on his arrival at New York. As the two faced each other, neither knew at least Jefferson did not know, that they were in reality bitter enemies. For theirs were two different types of minds that are always in conflict with each other—and this time the prize of the content would be the future

THOMAS JEFFERSON

of America. Hamilton saw all glory in the past. Jefferson in the future. Jefferson had at first objected to the Constitution because it had no Bill of Rights protecting the citizen against tyranny; Hamilton's objections were on the ground that the central government did not have enough power. It was enough for an idea to be new and untried for Jefferson to be interested in it and for Hamilton to be suspicious of it.

In the eighteenth century a new idea was gaining ground throughout the civilized world. Jefferson's mind and temperament were of the kind to be most impressed by this idea. The idea was called "progress." Hitherto people had usually been afraid of change of the future, of the unknown. But science on the one hand, and the American Revolution on the other, had proved that changes could be for the better, that the future was full of changes anyway, that the unknown was like a mine full of gold waiting to be dug up.

Hence you faced the future with optimism and courage, with faith and hope. In other words you tried to keep the attitude of a young man instead of an old one. To Hamilton, all this was nonsense. Whatever existed was better than whatever did not yet exist. Once John Adams said that the British form of government would be the best in the world if you took away the corruption that went with it. Hamilton replied at once that without its corruption it would be less perfect. Corruption made it possible for the "best people," the wealthy, to run

XIII. ▲ REPUBLICAN COURT

things as they pleased, and whatever the "best people" pleased was best. Hamilton was the leader of the government party, the Federalists and the strong man of Washington's first Cabinet.

There were only four members in this first Cabinet. Besides Jefferson and Hamilton, there were General Knox, Secretary of War and Edmund Randolph Attorney General. General Knox stood four-square behind Hamilton. His pet ideas were a standing army and the abolition of all State governments. Edmund Randolph was a distant cousin of Jefferson's the son of the John Randolph who quit the colonies to go to live in England. Edmund Randolph had enlisted with Washington as soon as his father left the country. He had later been a Governor of Virginia. He was the sort of man who could not quite make up his mind because he could always see both sides of an argument. The result was that he would go with the side that pushed him hardest.

None of these things did Jefferson know when on his arrival in New York, he was met by the Secretary of the Treasury, who walked him up and down in front of Washington's residence for half an hour earnestly beseeching his help to save the Union from destruction. There was a certain bill before Congress which the members of the Southern States refused to pass. If this bill were not passed into a law the Northern States threatened to secede. Would Jefferson please speak to the gentlemen from the South and get them to consent

THOMAS JEFFERSON

to the passage of the Law? Otherwise, the Union was doomed.

In order to understand this critical bill upon which the existence of the Union seemed to depend, we shall have to go back among Hamilton's activities before Jefferson arrived on the scene. As soon as the new government had begun to operate, Hamilton had worked out a complete programme of finance. His programme had three main points in it. The first was that the United States should promise to pay all the debts it had contracted during the Revolutionary war, dollar for dollar, with interest. This seems at first sight fair enough but in the meantime this is what had happened.

The Continental Congress and after it the Confederation had very soon run out of money. They had therefore paid their soldiers, and the farmers who had supplied food to the army, with promissory notes. Since, before the adoption of the Constitution the government could collect very few taxes, it was not able to make good on these promissory notes. They therefore dropped in value, and soldiers, and farmers who needed money badly were compelled to sell them for ten or fifteen cent of the amount printed on them. Little by little wealthy men who knew what was coming had been buying up these promissory notes very cheaply. The Senators knew of Hamilton programme and some of them quietly bought up the soldiers' wages. The Senators told a few of their merchant friends in New York, Philadelphia and

XIII. A REPUBLICAN COURT

Boston, and these cautiously bought up the claims of farmers who had not yet heard Hamilton's programme. Thus, when the bill for "the funding of the national debt" came up before Congress, many rich men and Congressmen stood to become a richer if the bill were passed. But many poor soldiers and farmers were bound to become angry at hearing how they had been cheated.

Was it honest for Congressmen to vote on a measure that would make them personally rich? Hamilton was frankly not interested in the morality of the question. If the law when passed would make certain rich men richer it would have precisely the result for which Hamilton had created his financial programme—he would win over the support of the wealthy for his government. Better the support of a hundred wealthy men than that of ten thousand paupers.

For the government was not to redeem these printed certificates with cash. It was to give new promissory notes for the old ones. But these new promissory notes were sure to be paid at full value in time, and they would be bearing interest regularly. This meant that anyone who owned these promissory notes would support the government heart and soul, and would oppose any radical changes in it, for how else would he be sure of getting his money back?

This was the heart of Hamilton's policy. Interest would hold the "best people"; for the rest there was—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

force, a strong central government with a standing army.

When the bill for "funding the national debt" came up, a few held out for buying the certificates at the market value only, so that speculators might not amass unearned fortunes. Madison asked for a compromise measure which would be fair to the original holders of the certificates, the soldiers and farmers. But self-interest won the day, and Point One of Hamilton's programme was completed.

When the news of his victory finally leaked back to the remote settlements in the South and West, there was a rumbling of protest and revolt. Not only had certain farmers been cheated by speculators, but the speculators were to be paid out of taxes. Since the people, the farmers, paid the taxes, this meant that they were to pay their own cheaters for cheating them!

Hamilton's policies were creating an opposing party under Jefferson which, for lack of a better name, could only be called for the time being Anti-Federalist. This party, as yet unorganized, was based on a detestation of Hamilton's programme and a belief in democracy. Hamilton and the Federalists were not the wise politicians they thought themselves. Living in the East they forgot that nine tenths of the country's population lived on farms and in villages, and did not approve of all these favours to merchants and businessmen at their expense. In the East, men without property could not vote. Of all the new England

XIII. A REPUBLICAN COURT

States, only Vermont had universal suffrage. In 1790, New York had over 13,000 grown male residents, but only 1300 of them could vote. But in the new States farther west, democracy in politics was a fact and here the embittered veterans of the Revolutionary War and the farmers who felt themselves cheated were a power that could not be lightly dismissed.

In the meantime Hamilton was going ahead with Point Two of his three-part financial programme, the "assumption of State debts." The various State governments had also contracted debts, which at this time amounted to about twenty million dollars. Hamilton's plan was for the Federal government to take over these debts and add them to its own, paying as before out of taxes.

Again a fair-seeming idea that needs a little explanation. In the first place, those States principally in the South, who had already paid up most of their debts did not gain much by it. These States, after paying their own debts, would also have to pay the debts of other States through taxes on farmers. Also there would be the inevitable speculators who had bought up the debts cheaply and expected to be enriched for nothing.

Again Hamilton was thinking along the same lines as before. The government would owe more people money, and these people would support the government. Also, the central government would thereby become more important than the State governments. The Senate

THOMAS JEFFERSON

passed his "assumption bill" behind closed doors, but in the House of Representatives, which was open to visitors, the bill was defeated by the close vote of 31 to 29. For days the House had to adjourn without doing any business, because the two sides were so angry with each other that they would not discuss anything else.

This was the tangle of affairs in Hamilton's mind when he met Jefferson. The Northern States, he said, were threatening to secede, and they would surely do it if the "assumption bill" were not passed. Jefferson invited several of the leaders of both sides to his rooms, gave them a dinner, and urged them to come to some agreement that would not disrupt the Union.

Now for some time there had been much debate as to where the capital of the United States was to be. So Jefferson brought this question up as one on which some bargaining could be done. The North wanted "assumption" more than it did the capital. The Northern delegates, headed by Robert Morris, therefore guaranteed that two of them would vote to build a new capital on the Potomac if two Southerners would vote for the assumption of State debts. Point Two of Hamilton's programme was won.

For once Jefferson had stepped out of his character. He had acted as compromiser when his usual role was to take a firm stand on a question. In after years he bitterly regretted his part in the compromise. For the "danger"

XIII. A REPUBLICAN COURT

to the Union had been mostly in Hamilton's mind. When Hamilton's third point came up shortly thereafter, Jefferson was prepared for it. Hamilton had all along planned a "Bank of the United States" which was to be owned partly by the government but largely by private interests. As before the Senate at once passed Hamilton's third proposal, but the Anti-Federalists in the House of Representatives, led by Madison, attacked it vigorously.

When the bill finally came up for Washington's signature, he asked both Hamilton and Jefferson to write out their opinions of it. From the two papers then written comes the great controversy that was to be so often and seriously debated in the United States government: should the Constitution be strictly or liberally interpreted?

In this report on the "bank bill" Jefferson closed his remarks with a piece of advice to Washington that shows how he was always looking beyond the particular problem into the future. After attacking the "bank bill" as undesirable; after trying to prove that it was also unconstitutional; and after pointing out the dangers of a loose interpretation of the Constitution, he weakened his own arguments as follows. If, said Jefferson, the President could not decide whether the law was constitutional or not, and if he was not quite sure that Congress had made a very bad mistake, then he should sign the bill anyway. For in such a case the President should always allow the legislature to have its way. *He should use his veto power as little as possible.*

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Why does Jefferson prefer to let Congress have its way despite the fact that it has just passed a law which he disapproves of? It is because he looked upon Congress as representing the people more than the President does. He did not feel that any one man should stand in the way of the people's will.

Washington signed the bill, and Hamilton won all the three points of his financial programme. It was now his purpose to create a manufacturing industry that would be as great as England's. Unfortunately the United States was a farming country. Whence would come the labour for America's new mills and factories? Again we could learn from England. More than half the workers in English cotton mills were women and children. Hamilton could see nothing alarming in this. The wealth of the country seemed to him far more important than the possibility that future Americans might grow up stunted in body and mind through lack of schools and fresh air.

First, then, Hamilton put through increased import duties to protect the infant industries from foreign competition. Again the farmer had to pay in the form of higher prices for his goods. Then going from words to deeds, the energetic Secretary of the Treasury helped start a factory near the beautiful Passaic Falls of New Jersey, in what became the city of Paterson. But the farmers protested loudly. They were indignant because the factory owners' charter gave them the right to dig canals on any man's land. Even other factory owner's

XIII. A REPUBLICAN COURT

were outraged when they heard that Hamilton's new factory was not to be taxed for ten years and that its employees were to be excused from military service.

There is no doubt of Hamilton's genius. He was a financial giant, brilliant and forceful. And, though he helped make many a shady business man and politician rich by his programme, he himself seems to have remained honest all the while.

In comparison with Hamilton, Jefferson did not at first make so splendid an impression. Jefferson's duties were not of so important or striking a sort. His opposition to Hamilton, to the sort of country Hamilton wished to make of America, to the type of American Hamilton favoured, grew slowly at first.



Jefferson started the 'National Gazette' on 31st October 1791 through which he infused the Republican feeling in the people against Federalists

XIV. THE DUEL IN THE CABINET

When France became a republic, Jefferson was extremely anxious that this new government should succeed. Hamilton looked with dread and hatred on the French Revolution. He hoped that England would smash the democratic monstrosity. Thus there were growing up two attitudes toward Europe in America: pro-British (Hamilton) and pro-French (Jefferson). It was Hamilton who first took the offensive.

At first England had not designed to send a minister to the United States. Her business was conducted through an unofficial agent, Colonel George Beckwith. Jefferson refused to have anything to do with him. England must recognize the dignity of the United States by sending a

XIV. THE DUEL IN THE CABINET

real official minister. So instead of trying to do business with the Secretary of State Colonel Beck always turned to the Secretary of the Treasury when he needed information or help.

Later, when this agent was replaced by a minister, George Hammond, that gentlemen followed in the colonel's footsteps. He even wrote to his superiors in London that he preferred to have no relations with Jefferson that were not absolutely necessary.

In spite of the terms of the treaty of peace with England, British troops still remained in the Northwest Territory. When this was brought to Hammond's attention, he incautiously remarked that they belonged there by right, since it was in reality English territory. Where upon Jefferson drew up a reply to the English government that not only demolished any such claims, but that promised to back up the American claims with action. Jefferson had no desire to go to war with England. America could always boycott the rich British trade, or put an embargo on it.

Hammond, very much perturbed over Jefferson's reply, turned as usual to his sympathetic friend Hamilton. Hamilton, who told the British minister that this report represented only Mr. Jefferson's personal anti-British feeling, not Washington's or the Cabinet's, and that its "violent language" was most deplorable. When Hammond sent the report to London, he also included a note

THOMAS JEFFERSON

giving the opinion of the Secretary of the Treasury. The British government could safely ignore the report, he thought. The British government did.

This little piece of unpatriotic disloyalty of Hamilton's has come to light only in recent years, but it undoubtedly played its part in adding to the bitterness and tension in the Cabinet.

In the spring of 1791 occurred an incident which made these feelings flare up violently on both sides. The chief newspaper mouthpiece of the Federalists was the *Gazette of the United States*, edited by John Fenno. In the winter of 1790 the *Gazette* had hailed with transports of joy the publication of Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

Edmund Burke was a name dear to Americans. He had in England defended their rights against his own king. But he was over sixty now, and one revolution had been quite enough for this respectable Englishman. Besides, when he heard how the Paris mob had attacked Versailles, calling Queen Marie Antoinette vile names, he wept sentimental tears. The high point of his *Reflections* is a description of this Queen's beauty, youth, and splendor. Fortunately for the Republicans in America, there happened to be living in England at this time Thomas Paine, the man who had played so important a part in the American Revolution. In 1776 his pamphlet *Common Sense* had brought out into the open the movement for

XIV. THE DUEL IN THE CABINET

American independence that led up to the Declaration. When the Revolutionary War had at first gone against the colonists, his series of tracts called *The Crisis* gave them back their courage.

When Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* appeared, Tom Paine leaped into the fray with joy. In the spring of 1791 appeared his answer, *The Rights of Man*, a passionate defence of the French Revolution. Before the British government got around to suppressing it, this work had sold in enormous quantities, and of course made its way to America.

A friend of Madison's was the first to receive a copy. Madison borrowed it and passed it on to Jefferson. Jefferson was all enthusiasm for this brilliant defence of democracy. In the meantime Madison's friend asked to have his copy back, as he had promised to send it to a Philadelphia printer. To save this friend time and trouble Jefferson himself promised to send the work to the printer after he had finished reading it. This Jefferson finally did, sending along with the pamphlet a little note to explain the delay and express his thanks.

"I am extremely pleased to find it will be reprinted here," he wrote, "and that something at length is to be publicly said against the political heresies which have sprung up against us. I have no doubt our citizens will rally a second time around the standard of *Common Sense*."

THOMAS JEFFERSON

When the American edition appeared, Jefferson was as much surprised as were his political enemies to find that his little note, signed with his name and his official title, had been used as a preface to the book. Particularly indignant was the British agent, who asked what the American Secretary of State meant by recommending a pamphlet suppressed by His Majesty. Shocked and indignant were the Philadelphia aristocrats. Hurt and indignant was Vice President John Adams, who felt that the whole thing was an attack upon himself. So did his son John Quincy Adams in Boston, who at once sat down to write a series of articles that sneered at Tom Paine, Tom Jefferson, and democracy and praised the British government.

Madison defended Jefferson in writing, and behind Madison there were the hundreds of thousands who did not write but thought as he did—the farmers of the new West, the veterans of the Revolution, the masses who had taken the Declaration of Independence seriously.

All over the country Anti-Federalist societies began to spring up, using as their models the French political clubs. The democratic part of the country was at last aroused. The two political sides were being clearly marked off from each other.

Now that the Anti-Federalists were beginning to organize themselves into a democratic and republican party, they needed a newspaper that would do for Jefferson's

XIV. THE DUEL IN THE CABINET

friends what the *Gazette of the United States* was doing for Hamilton and his friends. So on October 31, 1791 appeared the first issue of the *National Gazette*. Its editor was the poet, Philip Freneau. Freneau was an ideal editor for the *National Gazette*. A born rebel, a poet of freedom, he had no love for the English government. The first issue of the journal contained articles in praise of Tom Paine, attacking Burke, and criticizing Hamilton's policies. In later issues there were references to Senators and Congressmen who had made huge profits by voting for Hamilton's bills.

Every time Hamilton picked up this newspaper, he grew more furious. His anger was directed not at Freneau but at Jefferson, whom he considered the real father of these articles. At last Hamilton could stand these attacks no longer, and wrote a series of venomous articles for Fenno's paper, signing them variously "An American," "Amicus," "A Plain, Honest Man," etc., etc. He claimed that Jefferson was paying out the government's good money for the support of this rascal Freneau so that the latter could attack the government that fed him.

Washington was grieved by the personal tone which the conflict was now taking on. He wrote letters to Hamilton and Jefferson, reminding them how difficult his own situation was being made by all this backstairs fighting and begging them to be more charitable with each other.

Hamilton's reply admitted that he had written the

THOMAS JEFFERSON

articles in Fenno's *Gazette*. But, he said, Mr. Jefferson had never ceased opposing him from the moment he came to New York. Had not Mr. Jefferson created the *National Gazette* with the principal idea of making the Secretary of the Treasury hateful to the people?

Jefferson's letter explained again that he differed with Mr. Hamilton's system not because it was Mr. Hamilton's but because such a system would undermine the republic by putting a certain department (the Treasury) over the people's elected legislature (Congress). Furthermore, Jefferson complained since they were on the subject, he might mention that Mr. Hamilton was constantly interfering in *his* department, particularly in relation to England and France.

All this bickering in the Cabinet, all this abuse from Hamilton's party, all these disapproving frowns of the "best people," were beginning to get on Jefferson's nerves. He who had been looked up to as the prophet of a new order in the drawing rooms of France was reviled as a filthy "democrat" by the judges, in the colleges, from the pulpits and in the drawing rooms of Philadelphia.

In March 1792, with Washington's first term only one more year to run, Jefferson began actively to prepare for his retirement to Monticello.

When in 1792 Washington was elected for a second term, the President asked Jefferson not to resign. This

XIV. THE DUEL IN THE CABINET

plea was seconded by Madison, Monroe, Page, and Edmund Randolph. He must do this for the country, save it from the Federalists, and not allow people to say that Hamilton had driven him out of office. At last Jefferson gave in. He would remain in the Cabinet a while longer.

No sooner had Jefferson agreed to stay in Philadelphia, than the struggle between the Federalists and the new party of Democratic Republicans burst out with more fury than ever before. Again the question was, what shall be our attitude toward France and toward England? This conflict was brought to ahead by the Genêt affair.

Edmund Charles Genêt the new minister sent to America by the Revolutionary government of France, was a person of more enthusiasm than act. He landed at Charleston on the frigate *Embuscade*. From there he sent the frigate on ahead to Philadelphia while he made the journey by land, in order to become acquainted with this sister republic. People flocked in from everywhere to cheer the emissary of revolutionary France.

The *Embuscade* arrived in Philadelphia first. As the frigate came into harbour, it gave a thundering salute of fifteen guns, one for each State in the Union. All day the Philadelphians swarmed over the ship, where they were given a hearty welcome.

In the meantime matters had grown very tense in the Cabinet. How should the American government treat

THOMAS JEFFERSON

this "upstart" Genêt? Hamilton had written out a set of questions for Washington to ask his Cabinet.

First question: Should Genêt be received at all?

"Yes, with qualifications," said Hamilton.

"Yes, unqualifiedly," said Jefferson.

Secondly: Should we treat with Genêt if we receive him?

There is no proof, said Hamilton, that the execution of the King was just. Why should we throw in our lot with a new republic that so many respectable governments are opposed to? Therefore, let us receive him, but not treat him like a regular minister.

Jefferson said: If we receive the minister at all, we recognize his government. How can we recognize this government by receiving its minister and then, by refusing to treat with him, refuse to recognize his government?

Thirdly: What is now the condition of our old treaties with France?

Said Hamilton: We made these treaties with the King. There is no longer any king. Hence the treaties are annulled.

Jefferson answered: It is the nation, the people,

XIV. THE DUEL IN THE CABINET

of France with whom we made the treaties. They used to carry on their affairs with a king, now they do without one. This is none of our business but is the private affair of France. For that matter, *both* of us have changed our government since signing the treaties. Do you forget that we adopted our Constitution afterward? Both nations, however, still exist and the treaties are still good.

These opinions of Jefferson became the guiding principles of our State Department in settling most problems of recognition ever since.

Washington decided to receive Genêt, but to remain neutral in France's war with England and the other kingdoms of Europe.

Genêt wound up his triumphal tour in Philadelphia, two weeks behind the *Embuscade*. He was greeted cordially by Secretary Jefferson, but when he called on the President he got a rather frigid reception. He could not understand why the President, his Cabinet, and the majority of Congress were not in sympathy with republican France. Had he not seen with his own eyes that three fourths of the people were enthusiastically behind him? From amazement at the difference between the American people and the American government, Genêt began to go over into irritation. He claimed that the treaties between France and the United States permitted him to fit out privateers to capture British ships, as he had already done

THOMAS JEFFERSON

at Charleston. Jefferson explained to him that Washington had decided to remain neutral in France's wars and would not permit him to fit out privateers in America. But the American people was *not* neutral! Genêt indignantly pointed out. That may be true, said Jefferson, but the President had decided.... The President! exclaimed Genêt, but isn't this a *republic*, don't the people do the deciding here through their Congress? Yes, Jefferson patiently explained, Congress makes the laws but the President enforces them, and no one can force the President to enforce them... Genêt stood up and bowed to Mr. Jefferson. He could not, he said, make him his compliments upon such a Constitution.

From this time on Genêt's actions became slightly insane. He was still under the delusion that he could appeal to the people over the head of the government. He outfitted more privateers; he formed a Jacobin revolutionary club; he organized a troop of mounted Frenchmen in the United States.

Among the prizes captured by the *Embuscade* was the British vessel *Little Sarah*. Genêt rechristened her *Le Petit Democrate* (The Little Democrat), outfitted her, and prepared to sail from the mouth of the Delaware, which was within a mile or two of the President's Philadelphia house. Washington was then away at Mount Vernon, and Jefferson made Genêt promise that he would not let "The Little Democrat" sail until Washington returned. For it was suspected that she had American arms and citizens on

XIV. THE DUEL IN THE CABINET

board, and Jefferson wanted the President to decide what to do about her.

Hamilton was all for erecting a battery on Mud Island to fire on the *Petit Democrat* if she should attempt to sail before the President came back from Mount Vernon. Considering the politeness with which Hamilton swallowed every insult from England, this foolish plan made Jefferson lose his temper. "The erection of a battery," he pointed out, "might stimulate the ship to leave. A French fleet of twenty men-of-war and a hundred and fifty merchant vessels were hourly expected in the Delaware and might arrive at the scene of blood in order to join in."

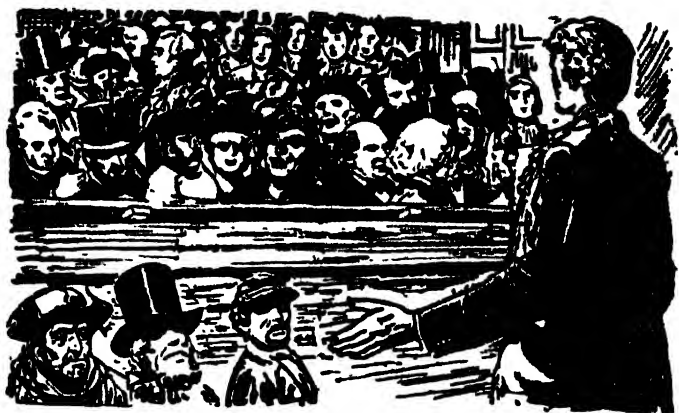
The battery was not erected. When Washington returned, sick of the squabbles in his Cabinet, he determined to let the Supreme Court settle all such questions in the future. Within three days the *Petit Democrat* put out to sea.

A list of Genêt's undiplomatic acts was sent to France with a copy of Jefferson's letters of remonstrance. France was asked to recall her minister. Jefferson's last act as Secretary of State was to send one of these letters of remonstrance to Genêt. For, in spite of Washington's pleas, Jefferson had now finally made up his mind to resign.

Genêt was recalled, France at the same time asking the United States to take back her *Gouverneur Morris*,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

whose activities were certainly equally undiplomatic. But Genêt, having fallen in love with the daughter of George Clinton, the staunch Republican Governor of New York, married her, became an American citizen, and lived here for the rest of his life.



Jefferson pleaded in favour of peace with France in conformity with his ideals of democracy.

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND?

Jefferson resigned his position in the Cabinet on the last day of the year 1793. For two and a half years he was allowed to devote himself to his old love—Monticello. He rebuilt the house, he farmed, he entertained visitors, he wrote letters. He was quite happy. He was over fifty now and expected to live out his days as the private gentleman farmer. He refused Washington's offers to come back to his job in Philadelphia.

Hamilton resigned two years after Jefferson, to practice law in New York. But Hamilton, too, still remained the leader of his party. Now, when it became known that Washington declined to serve a third term as President, the Republicans at once insisted on nominating

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Jefferson for the office. The Federalists nominated John Adams. This was not according to Hamilton's plans at all. Adams was a good Federalist, but he did not take orders easily, and he was one of the few Federalists who did not think that the sun rose and set by Mr. Hamilton's commands. So Hamilton worked hard to defeat Adams and have another Federalist, Thomas Pinckney, elected.

The result of this little conspiracy was very sad for Hamilton, for not only was Adams elected, but Jefferson became Vice President. Adams received 71 votes from the electors, Jefferson 68. In those days the candidate who received the second highest vote for the Presidency was made Vice President. Adams, however, kept Washington's old Cabinet, all the members of which were under Hamilton's thumb, so that all was not yet lost for the old-guard Federalists.

On March 4, 1797, Jefferson was sworn into office in the chamber of the Senate, of which he was now President.

Presiding over the Senate was not as arduous as dealing with foreign nations, but just as, when he was Secretary of State, he laid down many rules that are followed to this day, so too he was responsible for many of the present Senate rules.

Then suddenly, in the midst of these peaceful reforms,

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND ?

Jefferson found himself the best-hated man in America. The French situation was again to blame.

After Gouverneur Morris's recall from Paris, James Monroe had been sent in his stead to Represent the United States. Monroe was enthusiastically received. The popularity in France of this friend of Jefferson's was not pleasing to the Federalist Cabinet at home, and the Cabinet did not deal frankly with its representative. When Monroe told the French that there was no danger of America allying herself with England, this was precisely what he had himself been told. Then when rumours came that John Jay had signed a treaty in London favourable to England, he was as surprised and indignant as the French. But the French could not believe that the American government had duped its own minister. Monroe became unpopular and Washington had to recall him.

Jay's treaty was a Federalist triumph. It seemed to bring America and England closer together. Yet in a sense it was an American defeat, for it made no mention of the British practice of boarding American ships and impressing American seamen. Now, too, the French felt doubly justified in sending out privateers against American ships that traded with her enemy England.

Washington had then sent General C. C. Pinckney, a staunch Federalist, to France. The infuriated French refused to receive him. This was the situation that confronted Adams as the new President.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

With large sections of the county clamouring to go to war with King George again, on account of Jay's "humiliating" treaty, the Federalists thought this a poor time to start trouble with the French. So Hamilton proposed that a commission be sent over to reconcile the difference with France. In order that the commission have a united country behind it, one of its members should be a Republican. Through his mouthpiece, General Knox, Hamilton suggested Jefferson as the Republican member, perhaps to get him out of the country.

Adams wrote Knox in answer: "What would have been thought in Europe if the King of France had sent Monsieur, his eldest brother, as an envoy? Mr. Jefferson is in a sense in the same situation. He is the first prince of the country, and heir apparent to the sovereign authority." Adams did, however, decide to consult Jefferson about the problem. He asked Jefferson if he thought Madison would consent to go to France. Jefferson doubted it, but promised to ask Madison.

Madison refused to go to France. The next time Adams and Jefferson met, Jefferson brought up the subject of Madison. Adams seemed perturbed, hemmed and hawed, and departed as quickly as possible. Jefferson suspected what had really happened in the meantime. At the mention of Madison's name, Adams's whole Cabinet had threatened to resign if that ardent Republican were sent to France. That was the last time Adams ever consulted with Jefferson over a matter of policy.

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND ?

The three men Adams finally sent were General Pinckney (the same faithful Federalist), John Marshall (another Federalist), and Elbridge Gerry. Gerry, the only Republican, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and would later become Vice President under Madison.

Talleyrand was then Minister for Foreign Affairs in the French government. He kept the three American commissioners waiting for days. Finally they were approached "after candlelight" by three men who have come down in history as Mr. X, Mr. Y, and Mr. Z. These last three letters of the alphabet suggested that the way to get action was to cross with silver the palms of the leaders of the French government.

When the American commissioners, hardly able to believe their ears, cried out their astonishment, these alphabetical gentlemen simply shrugged their shoulders.

The commissioners had several more interviews with Messrs. X, Y, and Z. The French Revolution was now in a sad moral state. It has lost its first idealistic fervour, and was now going rapidly downhill toward Napoleon, by whom it would shortly be conquered. The very fact that a man like Talleyrand could hold so high a position proved that such underhand dealings were quite possible. Madison was stunned by this piece of dishonest stupidity. It would surely drive America into the arms of England.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Federalist newspapers worked themselves up into a frenzy of hatred against France. Congress created a Secretaryship of the Navy.

Hamilton, who just a few months before had recommended sending Jefferson on a peace commission to France, now suddenly became as war-mad as the most rabid of his followers. But the reason was not the XYZ affair.

There was a Venezuelan named Francisco Miranda, a soldier of fortune, a patriot, who had served with the French in the American Revolution. Then he had fought in the French Revolution. Now he dreamed of a South American Revolution against Spain. In London he had met Rufus King, the American Ambassador, and had interested him in the scheme. King wrote Hamilton about it. The idea was to get Spain to join France ; then have the United States declare war against France, which would also mean against Spain ; then America and England together would wrest from Spain her South American colonies. What was there in this for the United States? Why, Florida and Cuba, for instance.

The brightest part of it all for Hamilton was the visions he had of himself commanding the American expeditionary forces in South America. He began to write vicious attacks upon France.

Jefferson, as acknowledged head of the Republican party, received his share of abuse. There were even

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND ?

spies at the Jefferson dinner table who twisted his innocent statements into libels that could be used against him in the Federalist papers.

This war fever in America, this spy-hunting, Jacobin-hating madness was the ideal moment for striking one good sharp blow at the Republicans and wiping them out once for all. So, in spite of the warnings of their best minds, including Hamilton, the Federalists rushed through two laws, which began what has been called " the American Reign of Terror."

The Republicans in their confusion were not strong enough to stay this storm. In Congress the Anti-Federalist battle had to be waged almost single-handed by Albert Gallatin, and against him much of the anti-French fury was directed.

Albert Gallatin, born in Geneva, Switzerland, of a wealthy and noble family, had come to Massachusetts in 1780 to throw in his lot with the new republic across the Atlantic. His fine, clear mind, the iron control of his temper, and his native gifts of leadership soon made him one of the chiefs of the Anti-Federalist party.

Now the fact Gallatin had been born a Swiss was a fine weapon in the hands of the Federalists. A Swiss was the next thing to Frenchman, and Gallatin *must* be "pro-French." His own friends were afraid to stand by him, and an excited Congress passed the Alien Bill.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

It provided that foreigners would have to reside here fourteen years before they could become citizens and that the President could order out of the country any foreigner he thought dangerous. This bill was aimed directly at Frenchmen, of course, and at critics of the Federalist party.

This bill was never enforced. One reason for its not being enforced was that there were in this country many runaway or exiled French royalists, of whom the Federalists were rather fond. Most of the other aliens at this time happened to be Englishmen, whom the Federalists would not have hurt for the world.

The Republican hated the Alien Law intensely. They liked to think of America as a haven of refuge for oppressed people, for enemies of tyranny, from all over the world.

If the Alien Law could not be enforced, the Sedition Law, which was aimed directly at Americans and not foreigners, was very vigorously enforced. The Sedition Law punished with fines and imprisonment any persons who combined to oppose any measure of the government. This was intended to wipe out the Democratic clubs. More important, you could not even publish a criticism of an American law or official. All a Federalist judge had to believe was that such a criticism tended "to bring the government of the United States or its officers into disrepute or to excite the hatred of the people," and he could clap the Republican writer or editor into jail.

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND ?

But, though Republican editor after editor was being thrown into jail, the Republican party had *not* been crushed by the Sedition Law. On the contrary, the Federalists had by this act of tyranny turned the country against them, as Hamilton had feared. The Democratic Republican clubs, which the Sedition Law was supposed to make illegal, began to make their appearance everywhere.

Meanwhile, Jefferson, with the Democratic clubs behind him, was waging a fight against the Alien and Sedition Laws. Of course, these laws were unconstitutional since they denied the right of free speech and free assembly. They were just the sort of laws that would act as protection for people who wanted to destroy the rest of the constitution.

In 1798, during an adjournment of Congress, Jefferson was in Virginia. There came to visit him at Monticello two men with a plan for attacking the unpopular laws. They were Wilson Cary Nicholas, a leading Jeffersonian of Virginia, and John Breckenridge, a young man who had become imbued with Jefferson's ideas. Their plan was to get various State legislatures to pass resolutions declaring that the Alien and Sedition Laws violated the Constitution and were therefore null and void and could not be enforced. Jefferson wrote out the resolutions they wanted. Breckenridge copied them with some changes of his own and took them to the Kentucky legislature, where they were passed. Madison drew up the resolutions for Virginia, which were also passed.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Jefferson and his followers knew that these resolutions could never be passed in Federalist States, but they also knew that a lot of comment would be caused. In the debates that would follow, both favourable and unfavourable, the facts would come out before the people, and the people as a whole, they knew, would oppose the two tyrannical laws.

In the meantime the Federalists seemed quite blind to the fact that the war spirit in America was rapidly evaporating. Intrigues for high commands went on merrily, though war had not yet been declared. General Washington, of course, would be commander in chief, but, as he was now too old to see active service, the real leader of the American forces would be the second in command. Hamilton was determined that this should be no one but himself. Unfortunately, Adams was the man who would do the naming of the second in command, and Adams was having less and less love for Mr. Hamilton, who was always trying to tell him what a President should do. After all, the Constitution made the President the commander-in-chief of the armies.

Hamilton did not politely wait for Adams to make up his mind. First he got Washington to support him. Finally, when Washington sent Adams a curt little note, Hamilton was appointed acting head of the army.

Soon the country began to have a taste of what all this jingling of spurs meant for ordinary people. Militaristic

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND ?

nations have a way of encouraging their professional soldiers to look down on civilians as less than nothing. Soon the newspapers began to publish reports of military outrages against the population. Aside from American civilians and Republicans, where was the enemy all this time? There did not seem to be any.

When Marshall and Pinckney had left France with the XYZ papers, Gerry had stayed behind. At length he got into touch with Talleyrand, who told him that the French government had had nothing to do with the unsavoury affair, and that France absolutely did *not* want war with America. France would be glad to receive a minister who was not Anti-Republican and pro-British. She had not sent a minister herself only because it was feared he would not be received at Philadelphia. Finally as a sign of his good faith, Talleyrand sent Gerry a new decree just issued by the French government. It required all French privateers to put up a bond in money guaranteeing that there would be no unauthorized attacks on American shipping.

Gerry hastened home with what he thought was good news. But his report only proved to the saber-rattling Federalists that France was now so frightened that she should be easy to defeat. Gerry's news *was* good news—for Jefferson, who felt that more people must be made to know the truth of the French situation. For this purpose, Jefferson now turned in a surprising direction. One would think that two men could not have less in common

than Jefferson and Edmund "Moderation" Pendleton. Yet they did have in common: sincerity, a love of justice, and a desire for peace. Jefferson now asked Pendleton to take Gerry's voluminous report, which very few people would read, and boil it down to a short summary of facts. Coming from Pendleton who was by no mean as "Jacobin," Gerry's report would close the mouths of the Federalist warriors. Everyone could and would read it.

The case for war began to seem weaker and weaker. Lafayette offered to come to America and explain everything if Washington thought it would be wise and that it would aid the cause of peace. Talleyrand, who knew Adams personally and had spent pleasant hours at his house in America, sent the President a personal message asking that bygones be bygones.

Dr. Logan, a friend of Jefferson's who had gone to France unofficially to study the situation, talked to Talleyrand. Every important personage in France assured him that war with America was unthinkable. This news only made the Federalists more furious at him. Congress went so far as to pass what was popularly known as the "Logan Bill." It forbade any American citizen to communicate by word or in writing with any official of a foreign government about matters of dispute between the two governments. In other words, an ordinary American citizen could not even talk about American foreign problems if there was a foreign official present.

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND ?

Then, in the darkest days for democracy, the blow fell, not on the Republicans, but on the Federalists. Adams had been thinking things over. First Gerry's report, then Logan's, and now reports from William Murray American minister to Holland, all showed that there was no longer cause for war, and that the French were apologizing handsomely. Adams was an honest man with no Napoleonic ambitions. He decided not to declare war, and in February 1799 he named Murray as ambassador to the French Republic.

There were two ways in which Jefferson could take much credit for this rising tide of Republican feeling. First, he always tried to keep the facts before the people's minds. Secondly, he gave the people a programme to fight for. The first part of Jefferson's task was to have the people know and be excited about the facts. It was Jefferson's plan to publish tens of thousands of copies of Pendleton's little pamphlet on Gerry's report. They were to be circulated by Congressmen returning to their homes. Jefferson not only wrote an unceasing stream of letters himself he constantly urged his friends, especially Madison, to write and to talk.

The one fact that the Republican journals harped on all the time was the terrific expense of a war—an unnecessary expense when it was an unnecessary war. Gerry's report, the pamphlets repeated, proved that France did *not* want war, did *not* intend to invade America, and that, therefore, war with France *was* unnecessary.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

As for Jefferson's programme: He opposed the Alien and Sedition Laws as dangerous to the people's liberty. He opposed a professional standing army. For national defence Jefferson preferred the militia, where every civilian was a soldier, and yet not a professional soldier.

The government should be as frugal and simple as possible, with no taint of monarchy or aristocracy. He was against taking away the power of the States to give to the Federal government or of taking away the power of Congress to give to the President.

"I am for free commerce with all nations," he wrote, "political connection with none." Free trade was the advice he had given his French friends, because a country made up of farmers needed low prices for manufactured goods. In advising against foreign entanglements he was voicing the belief of many Americans of his time that political alliances with the Old World could only complicate the growth of democracy in the New World.

"I am for freedom of religion, for freedom of the press, and against all violations of the Constitution (which try) to silence by force and not by reason the complaints or criticisms, just or unjust, of our citizens" against the conduct of their officials. He was against going "backwards instead of forwards to look for improvement." Finally, "I am for encouraging the progress of science in all its branches."

On these principles Jefferson hoped to see laid the

XV. FRANCE OR ENGLAND ?

foundations of a political party. But, as Federalist spies began to annoy him more, Jefferson began to think of his quiet home in Virginia, where his mail, at any rate, would be less likely to be tempered with by officials looking for treasonable statements. So in the summer and autumn of the year 1800, feeling his work well done, Jefferson retired to Monticello. He rode his plantation and cultivated his crops.



Jefferson's inauguration showed his simple tastes. He walked to the ceremony through the streets of Washington.

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

While Jefferson had been taking his last vacation at Monticello, the capital had finally been moved to the new city of Washington in June 1800. This was the "capital city on the Potomac" for which Jefferson had bargained his support of Hamilton's first financial bills. Crude and raw as it was, it was Jefferson's own capital as aristocratic Philadelphia could never have been. For that November Jefferson had been elected President of the United States.

His election had been fought tooth and nail, by fair means and foul. Not only did Hamilton wish to see the Republicans defeated; he also did not want to see Adams made President again. For he despised Adams, this man

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

who had "traitorously" allowed peace with France. First he tried to get Washington to run again. But before a letter could reach Mount Vernon, the "father of his country" died. Then Hamilton published a criticism of Adams, and appeals to all federalist to vote for C.C. Pinckney instead. The only effect of these attacks, however, was that more people voted for the Republican candidates.

For the second time the American people turned to the principles of the Declaration of Independence and against the principles of old Europe. Adams and Pinckney were both defeated. Jefferson and Aaron Burr were elected.

But Jefferson and Burr each had the same number of votes! Here was some thing the Constitution had overlooked. The Constitution stated that the candidate with the second highest number of votes should be Vice President, and it was really as Vice President that the Republicans had nominated and voted for Burr. The Constitution also stated that, in the case of a tie between the highest candidates, the House of Representatives should decide which was to be President and which Vice President. And the House of Representatives was still Federalist when counted by States, which was the way it was to vote!

Hamilton hated Burr perhaps more than he did anyone else in the world. It was Burr who had won

THOMAS JEFFERSON

New York State away from him. Aaron Burr was an ambitious man, very much like Hamilton in character. Though he could not bring himself to plot for the Presidency, neither could he bring himself to renounce it openly. He kept quiet. This unclearness in Burr's actions earned him the distrust of many Republicans, including Jefferson.

Jefferson, for his part, expressed himself as quite willing to abide by the decision of Congress. The House of Representatives assembled behind closed doors, with the Senate as witnesses, to choose the President. Each of the sixteen States had one vote. On the first ballot Jefferson received only eight votes, Burr six, and two States could not make up their minds. The winner needed nine votes. The House voted again. Same result. Again the House voted. The vote remained unchanged. Again and again, all that night, the Representatives voted. The next morning nothing had been settled. Days passed, and the vote was still the same. Gouverneur Morris met Jefferson on the steps of the Capitol and suggested that a bargain might be struck with the Federalists. Jefferson refused to have any dealings with them. A week passed, on and on the thirty-sixth balloting, Maryland and Vermont swung over to Jefferson, giving him ten votes.

• The Federalists faced a future in which the country was no longer to be theirs to rule. But they still had a card up their sleeves. Until the inauguration on March

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

4th, Adams was still President, Congress was still Federalist. Congress hastily set about providing for the future of many faithful Federalists. Following a plan of Hamilton's, they passed a law creating many new Federal courts. The judges were to be appointed for life, so that they could not be removed by the incoming Republican administration. As Jefferson, still sitting at the head of the Senate, pointed out, there were at that time already more Federal courts than the country needed, but that had nothing to do with the plan.

The law was hurriedly passed, the judges were appointed, the Senate consented to the appointments. Time was passing swiftly and, by the evening of March 3rd, several of the commissions had not yet been signed. Late into the night Chief Justice John Marshall, acting as Secretary of State, sat at his desk filling out the commissions and signing them.

Jefferson had already chosen Levi Lincoln as his Attorney General. The story, as it came down in his family, is that Jefferson called on Mr. Lincoln, gave him his watch, and ordered him to take possession of the State Department on the stroke of midnight. At midnight Lincoln dramatically entered Judge Marshall's office. "I have been ordered by Mr. Jefferson," he said solemnly, "to take possession of this office and its papers."

"Why, Mr. Jefferson has not yet qualified," exclaimed

THOMAS JEFFERSON

the startled Chief Justice and acting Secretary of State. "It is not yet twelve o'clock," and he drew out his watch.

Whereupon Lincoln drew out his, and showed it to Marshall. "This is the President's watch," he said, "and rules the hour."

Judge Marshall looked longingly at the unfinished commissions on his desk. But in his pocket he had a few of the commissions, and the men who finally received them were thereafter called "John Adams's midnight judges."

Jefferson's first task as President was the selection of his Cabinet. The two outstanding members of Jefferson's party were James Madison, the natural choice for Secretary of State, and Albert Gallatin, who received Hamilton's old position of Secretary of the Treasury.

Jefferson and his Cabinet immediately set about cleaning up Federalist abuses. They pardoned all those in prison for violating the Sedition Law. They gave back the fines collected. They cancelled the offices of the "midnight judges." To those who had suffered under the Alien and Sedition Laws Jefferson wrote personal letters of cheer and good-will.

• Thomas Paine was still in France, now living unhappily in a dirty little hovel, seemingly forgotten by the nation he had done so much to create. Jefferson wrote him

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

that now America was more like what it had been just after the Revolution, when men had believed in liberty and the rights of man. Would Paine, who had all his life laboured to make the world like this, care to come back to America? The president offered him passage in a naval vessel then visiting France. For Paine did not dare cross the ocean in an ordinary merchant ship. The English navy might easily have picked him up during a search at sea and clapped him in irons. The British government was one at least that had not forgotten Tom Paine.

Paine accepted the invitation with joy.

In December 1801, Congress assembled again. Instead of appearing before it to deliver his annual address, Jefferson sent it a written message—a practice which has been followed by all the Presidents ever since except Woodrow Wilson. The Federalist journals sneered. Was not a procedure that was good enough for the King of England good enough for Mr. Jefferson? As a matter of fact Jefferson had sent in a written message simply because he wrote better than he spoke. If he had thought of the King of England, he certainly would not have changed his plans. The last thing Jefferson was interested in was giving an aristocratic impression.

He forbade the use of the President's image on coins. He made it a practice to refuse all presents. He did not allow his birthday to be celebrated as Washington's and

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Adams's had been. He avoided anything that aped royal customs.

The most important event to happen during Jefferson's eight years in the Presidency was the Louisiana Purchase. When the United States extended only to the Mississippi, it made a great difference which nation controlled New Orleans. If the farmers of the West, of Kentucky and Ohio, could not float their produce down the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico, they were lost. The overland roads were nothing but muddy trails. As long as Spain, a weak country, held this key city, there was no trouble, but when Napoleon took it from Spain in 1802, he cancelled the treaties that Jefferson had signed with Spain and closed New Orleans to American produce.

Immediately a new clamour for war broke out in the West. This time it was the Federalists in the East who were all for peace. But Jefferson was consistent. He refused to plunge the country into war. Instead he sent Robert Livingston, American minister to France, with instructions to arrange some sort of treaty. Livingston began to negotiate with Napoleon. He offered to buy New Orleans for six million dollars. He seemed to get nowhere and wrote back that the whole matter might as well be dropped. Jefferson at once sent James Monroe to help Livingston with the negotiations.

Before Monroe could reach Paris, however, Napoleon had come to a sudden decision. He was about to embark

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

on a new war with England, and England's fleet was the strongest in the world. How could Napoleon hope to protect the Louisiana Territory so far away? Besides, he needed money for his wars. Give him fifteen million dollars, he said, and the United States could have, not only New Orleans, but the whole of Louisiana.

Livingston was dazed. Buy a whole empire as big as the United States? Those had not been his instructions, but, taking his courage in his hands, he seized the bargain. Monroe arrived and agreed with him. They signed the treaty in April 1803.

Perhaps no one was more surprised than Jefferson that the French should give up an empire as easily as this. On the other hand his conscience bothered him. Did the Constitution give him the power to take over land like this? He played with the idea of rushing through an amendment to the Constitution. But there was no time. Suppose Napoleon changed his mind in the meantime! The treaty was adopted.

How the Federalists in the Senate stormed! Louisiana could only mean more Democrats, more pioneer farmers with Jeffersonian ideas.

They were right, of course. From then on the pioneer mind became the typical American mind. And this mind always faced West until finally the Pacific had been reached. Out of the Louisiana Purchase were finally

THOMAS JEFFERSON

carved the States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma, with great portions of Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and Minnesota. A great deal of this territory was practically unknown.

Jefferson had often thought with greed of the wealth of knowledge that a trained observer could find in the great Northwest. He had tried to inspire the explorer Ledyard with this enthusiasm while in France. When, in 1792, Captain Gray discovered the Columbia River on the Pacific coast, Jefferson's interest was fired anew. That year he suggested to the American Philosophical Society that it sent an exploring expedition across the continent. He and some others would contribute the money.

Such an expedition was actually started. It was put in charge of Meriwether Lewis, a young man of nineteen who had grown up not ten miles from Monticello. But the other leader of the expedition, a French scientist, was ordered elsewhere by his government, and that plan also fell through. In 1801 Lewis became private secretary to the President and they must have discussed the idea of westward exploration again and again.

- Their chance came in January 1803. Congress was debating an act to establish trading houses with the Indian tribes. The President sent Congress a confidential message in which he urged that the Indians of the Missouri

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

Valley should not be overlooked. To lay out trade routes and look the possibilities over it might be a good idea to send an expedition first. The message had to be secret, of course, because this territory was owned by France.

Congress fell in with the idea and voted the President a modest sum of money for such an expedition. Jefferson added some from his own pocket. Captain Lewis would, of course, be in charge. Jefferson now knew him, after two years of working together, to be the ideal man for the job. He was a good leader of men, expert in woodcraft, knew the character of the Indians as well as their customs and beliefs, was a careful observer of nature, and, most important of all, knew just what Jefferson expected of the expedition.

Lewis asked if he might have go with him his old comrade-in-arms, William Clark. Lieutenant Clark was the youngest brother of the George Rogers Clark who had captured the Northwest Territory for the United States just before Jefferson was made Governor of Virginia. Like his brother, William Clark as a veteran Indian fighter and woodsman.

Late in 1803 Lewis and Clark took their little party into winter quarters in St. Louis, at the mouth of the Missouri. Here they trained their men thoroughly until they were ready to start in the spring. Meanwhile, the great news came that Napoleon had sold Louisiana

THOMAS JEFFERSON

and that the exploration was therefore to be made in United States territory after all. There would be no interference from France or Spain.

On the 14th of May, 1804, the expedition finally set out in three boats. It consisted of fourteen army soldiers, nine volunteers, an interpreter and his Indian wife, and Clark's Negro valet. Part of the way they were accompanied by sixteen additional men. That winter they spent in North Dakota among the Mandan Indians. They continued up the Missouri until they came to three forks of the river which Lewis named the Jefferson, the Madison, and the Gallatin. Then they followed the Jefferson into southwestern Montana, where the Shoshone Indians gave them horses to cross the Rockies. They paddled down the Columbia River in canoes and reached its mouth on November 15, 1805.

In a year and a half the expedition had travelled about four thousand miles. It had met Indian tribes never before seen by white men. It had discovered new animals like the grizzly bear, the mule deer, and the mountain goat. It had collected many specimens of earths, salts, minerals, and plants. It had been the first party of explorers to reach the Pacific by crossing the continent north of Mexico. And it had thereby established America's most important claim to the Oregon Territory. In everything that Jefferson had wished, it was a success.

After spending the winter on the coast the party

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

started back on March 23, 1806, and reached St. Louis exactly six months later, one third the time it had taken them to go, though they stopped to explore the Yellowstone on the way. Lewis and Clark came back to Washington as men who had successfully carried out the most romantic exploration of modern times. The leaders were rewarded with large grants of land. Captain Lewis was made governor of the northern part of the Louisiana Territory, while Clark became brigadier general of the territorial militia, and later Indian agent.

It had been Hamilton's idea to keep the government constantly in debt to the rich. This would give people with money a chance to make more out of the government, and it would also mean that the wealthy classes would always support the government, since their money was invested in it. But Jefferson had the curious idea, which no government has ever followed, of making each generation pay back its own debts. He did not think it fair for people to make debts that their children would have to pay.

So Jefferson and Gallatin sold the government's share of the United States Bank. They paid for the Louisiana Purchase by selling the land cheaply. They economized expenses, abolishing many unnecessary government offices that had been filled with place-hunting Federalists. They reduced the number of ministers sent to foreign countries and cut down the size of the navy. This made it possible for Congress to reduce the taxes of the country.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Jefferson's first term of office was ending with the country as a whole very well satisfied with the Republican Party's administration. Jefferson himself was immensely popular. He should now have been one of the happiest men in the world. But now, at the height of his public triumph, he was overwhelmed by private tragedy. His daughter Maria died. "I have lost the half of all I had," Jefferson wrote to his old school friend Page, then Governor of Virginia. That winter Martha's family moved into the White House to help her father bear his loneliness.

In the election of 1804, Jefferson received 162 electoral votes while C.C. Pinckney, the Federalist candidate, got only 14. This Republican landslide spelled the finish of the Federalist party. Its spirit had already been broken with the death of Alexander Hamilton in July 1804. The enmity between Aaron Burr and Hamilton had reached such a pitch that Burr sent the Federalist leader a challenge, fought a duel with him, and killed him.

Burr's political career seemed ended by this deed. Jefferson's Vice President for his second term was George Clinton, former Governor of New York. The Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution was passed so that never again would there arise the question as to which of two men had been elected President and which Vice President. From now on Vice Presidents were voted for only as Vice Presidents.

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

Jefferson hoped in his second term to devote himself to making public improvements and to encouraging the growth of education and science. With the national debt being rapidly paid off, this should have been easy. But these grand schemes for prosperity and public happiness were ended by events in Europe.

England and France were at death grips for the control of Europe. England with her great fleet decided to starve France into submission. In 1806 she declared the western coast of Europe under blockade. Napoleon immediately struck back by declaring the British Isles blockaded. Now Napoleon's blockade meant practically nothing, for he had not the ships to enforce it, but England's blockade was disastrous for American commerce. Soon the American coast had warships from France and England hovering around, capturing American vessels and violating all the rights of neutral powers. A great many Americans began to shout for war against England. A great many others, whose experiences were different, raised an equal shout for war on Napoleon. Now, whichever side America joined, she would help the other. As between Napoleon and George III Jefferson could see nothing to choose. Both were the sort of tyrants he detested. Their wars only added to the corruption and tyranny over Europe. Why should America help either, especially when what America needed most just then was a peaceful chance to grow. But the arrogant high-handedness of the British and French navies in the Atlantic grew so great that Jefferson had to do something.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

He resorted once again to his favourite commercial weapon. He got Congress to pass an Embargo Act in December 1807. From then on American ships were forbidden to leave America for any European port whatsoever.

For a year this law held good. Then the vigorous American shipping industry began to languish and die. Next came the turn of the farmers whose produce piled up in the warehouse till it decayed, because it could not be sold abroad. Complaints began to rise higher and higher until in March 1809, during Jefferson's last few days in office, the bill had to be repealed. In its place was passed the Non-Intercourse Act, which merely forbade trading with England and France. In little more than a year Jefferson had lost almost all the popularity he had enjoyed for more than six years of his Presidency. The only satisfaction that the year 1808 had brought the President was the opportunity to put his signature to an act of Congress forbidding the future importation of slaves.

When candidates for the next election were being chosen, eight State legislatures passed resolutions endorsing Jefferson for a third term. This, in spite of the unpopularity of the Embargo Act, must have made him feel much better. More States would have followed, but Jefferson stopped the talk of a third term at once. He pointed out that, though the Constitution said nothing about restricting the number of terms any one man might serve, such a restriction would be the best way to keep the office from

XVI. MR. PRESIDENT

becoming a position for life and possibly even hereditary. Short terms were safer for democracy. So Madison was chosen to be the next President, to Jefferson's intense joy, for he loved the faithful Madison as he would a son. The country would be in good hands. It would follow in the direction pointed by the Declaration of Independence. He could retire now, at the age of sixty-six, to cultivate his Monticello.



Jefferson devoted his last years to the cause of education. He founded the University of Virginia and designed its beautiful buildings.

XVII. HE STILL LIVES

Soon after Jefferson's retirement from Washington some young men came to seek his advice about their studies. In supervising the course of their reading Jefferson's aim was, he said, to keep their attention fixed on the main object of all science—the freedom and happiness of man.

As Jefferson discussed their problems with his young disciples, there grew sharper and more insistent in his mind a pet scheme that he had cherished for many years. Even as a young Virginian lawmaker he had fought vigorously for a well-rounded plan of free public education, embracing everything from grade school to university. Despite Madison's able help, these plans had not made much headway against the conservative leaders of the State.

XVII. HE STILL LIVES

Now Jefferson fastened on the university part of the plan as something he *must* see accomplished.

Jefferson had a young friend, Joseph Carrington Cabell, as interested in education as he was. He urged Cabell to enter the State legislature and help pass laws that will give children primary schools and young men a worthy university. He ran for the House of Delegates and was elected. In 1810 he ran for the State Senate, was elected, and stayed there nineteen years. He refused appointments to Madison's and to Monroe's Cabinet, preferring to stay in Virginia where he could keep an eye upon what he considered his trust—the educational laws of his State.

In waging his grand fight for what he called "the holy cause of the University," Cabell discovered many enemies. First and most important was the indifference of the people, which is one of the heaviest burdens that a believer in democracy must learn to bear and understand. Then there was the opposition of William and Mary, loath to see another university in the State. Finally there was the intolerance of many to the idea of an "infidel college," for Jefferson's unconcealed purpose was the creation of a non-sectarian school.

As the years went by seemingly without result, Jefferson finally seized an opportunity to found the sort of university he wanted even without the help of the State. One morning in 1814 as he was cantering down a hillside, he passed a little academy not far from his home. This academy was in

THOMAS JEFFERSON

difficulties and the board of directors happened to be sitting to solve its problems when Jefferson rode by. The president of the board was Peter Carr, Jefferson's nephew and the son of Debney Carr, Jefferson's old friend. "Let's call in Mr. Jefferson," said Carr; "he's always been interested in education."

After Jefferson had heard their explanation and had told them his theories of education, he was struck by a new idea. Why not reorganize this little academy into the university he dreamed of.

Not long after, Jefferson had convinced the board of the wisdom of such a plan, and they all set about founding Central College. Jefferson himself, burdened as he was by debts, contributed a thousand dollars. Three years later Central College was well on its way to being finished.

Then at last, Cabell and his friends, by a great effort, pushed through a bill for the founding of a State university. Jefferson immediately offered the partly completed Central College to the State. Not only would this save the State money but it would keep the State college where Jefferson wanted it—at his own doorstep.

Jefferson's friends knew he was right in wanting the University in Ablemarle County, and they worked to get him his way. Who else would supervise the fledgling college with such loving care? Who else would take so many pains and who deserved greater credit for the success

XVII. HE STILL LIVES

of the bill? This seventy-four year old man had fought forty years for this university, and now that it existed it should be his to run.

First Jefferson was concerned with the physical appearance of the University. This was to be no rude pile or haphazard jumble of buildings. This school was to have a sound mind in a healthy body. It was to delight the eye as well as stimulate the intellect. Thus would the university gain prestige, attract famous teachers from all over the world, and give the students real examples of beautiful classical art. So Jefferson turned again to Palladio, his architectural Bible.

Jefferson's plan was that the university should be, not a single building, but a sort of well-thought-out academic village. There was to be a small and separate lodge for each professor with two or more large halls below for his class and two chambers above for his living quarters. Connecting these lodges would be one-story dormitories where the students were to have their rooms. A covered way made it possible for students to go from one school to the next in any weather without getting wet. Of course, the students of any particular professor were to have those dormitories nearest his lodge. Jefferson remembered how much his personal contact with Professor Small had meant to him in his own college days.

The Rotunda was modelled on the Roman Pantheon, the ancient Temple of All the Gods. Each of the ten

THOMAS JEFFERSON

lodges, too, was adapted from some different famous building of ancient times—the Theater of Marcellus, the Baths of the Emperor Diocletian, the Temple of Fortune, and so on. Studying Greek and Latin, ancient history, and classic art inside such buildings might make what the students read more alive to them.

There were to be many novel features in the University of Virginia. For one thing there was to be no president. Every year the professors were to elect one of their own number to act as chairman. The professors were also to remain free to choose their own textbooks. Their lodges were assigned to them by drawing lots.

Though Jefferson had planned on ten schools or faculties, there was money enough for only seven when the university formally opened in March 1825. These seven independent schools taught Ancient Languages, Modern Languages, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy (physics), Moral Philosophy, Chemistry, and Medicine. An eighth school, that of Law, was opened the next year. Only two degrees were to be granted: "Graduate" to any student who completed the course in any one school, and "Doctor" to a graduate of more than one school who also showed that he would continue his studies and would probably do something for science. The 116 students with whom the University opened were free to enter any of the schools they wished, and to take any of the courses they were prepared for. This is the elective system that Jefferson had observed in Europe but which was a new idea in the

XVII. HE STILL LIVES

United States.

One of Jefferson's novelties that aroused the most ill-feeling was the fact that the University was not under the guidance of any particular church. It was non-sectarian. Every college in those days was expected to have a clergyman at its head. At the University of Virginia clergymen of different denominations were asked to preach each Sunday, but the students were not forced to attend chapel if they did not wish.

Another typical Jeffersonian idea was student self-government. He felt that minor offenses at least should be left to a board of trustworthy students to punish. He also advocated the honour system in examinations, but this plan did not go into effect until sixteen years after his death.

Jefferson tried to keep in touch with every professor and student. Members of the faculty were frequent guests at Monticello. Once a week he invited students to his house in groups of four or five. Before and after dinner he spoke with each boy individually, but he let them dine by themselves. At this time his hearing was becoming difficult so that he could not understand very well when more than one person was speaking at once. So as not to disturb the boy's fun he therefore sat by himself in a little recess near the dining room.

Jefferson had by no means stopped designing things

THOMAS JEFFERSON

for the University. Over eighty, he drew up plans for an astronomical observatory and for an anatomy laboratory, though money was lacking to build them.

Contemplation of the future had never failed to give Jefferson a thrill. This university that he had made would live its own life, would *grow*, even after he was dead. The world might forget the name of Thomas Jefferson, and yet he himself would be alive in this child of his, shaping the minds of thousands of young men of the future, some of them perhaps geniuses that America would always be proud of.

It must not be thought that in the midst of all this building and planning for the future Jefferson had forgotten the hopes with which he had retired from the White House. He still "cultivated his garden." The University itself was merely the most splendid growth of that garden—a sort of sturdy oak planted in the midst of homely vegetables and pretty flowers. The prettiest of all the flowers were his grandchildren.

When Grandfather came home to live for good, the children formed the habit of following him all over the house and garden. He supervised their games and invented new ones for them and gave out the prizes to the winners. He asked them questions on their schooling and answered theirs. As soon as each child could read, he had begun to send it letters, and, as soon as it could write, he expected letters from it. When away, he was

XVII. HE STILL LIVES

always sending them clippings and poems he thought would interest them.

The older Jefferson grew, the more of a miser he became of his time. As if he had not accomplished enough for one man, he wanted to squeeze the last drops of wisdom and activity out of the few years that remained to him. Once he said to his daughter: "It is surprising how much you can do if you are always up and doing." So he was always up and doing.

No matter what time he had gone to bed the night before, he always rose with the sun. While the rest of the household still slept, he wrote and read letters until breakfast, which he took early. After breakfast he usually read for another half-hour. Then he visited his garden and rode over the plantation, or, in later years, to the University. When he came back, he either studied or amused himself at his work bench, where he always had some new model in progress. From one to three he was sure to be on horseback. In the evening he dined, and conversed with friends or played with the children. He went to his room at about nine, where he read for another hour or two before going to bed.

Fortunate for Jefferson that he had the building of the University to take his mind off his big Southern household sometimes, for he would have gone distracted at the great burden of debt it was piling up on his shoulders. Little by little, pieces of his various estates began to slip

THOMAS JEFFERSON

away to pay these debts. He found that he was what is sometimes called "land poor." That is, he owned lots of land that was only making him poorer every year. His Embargo Act in 1800 had hit his own farms as badly as anyone else's and the War of 1812 had made his crops of cotton and tobacco almost worthless, for they could not be sold.

During the War, the British had burned down the Library of Congress, and Jefferson saw a chance both to do his country good turn and to satisfy his own creditors somewhat. He sold his own library—one of the best and largest in the country, one that he had lovingly collected for fifty years—to the government. All the money from the sale of his library went to pay debts. It did not pay all the debts but it helped considerably, and Jefferson was beginning to look up again from under his burden when another financial blow suddenly threatened to crush him. Former Governor Wilson Nicholas of Virginia, an old political friend, whose daughter Thomas Jefferson Randolph had married, went bankrupt. Jefferson had endorsed a note of his for \$20,000 and now Jefferson was expected to pay this, too. It was the finishing touch to the ruin of Jefferson's fortune.

In desperation Jefferson tried to sell his estates, even in the end offering up Monticello itself. But he could find no rich buyer. Then he asked Cabell to see if the legislature would allow him to sell the estates by raffle or lottery. This permission was finally granted but, when his friends

XVII. HE STILL LIVES

throughout the United States heard that the Sage of Monticello was about to lose his home, they began to rally behind him in the newspapers. Subscriptions were at once taken up. New York City sent him \$8500, \$5000 came from Philadelphia and \$3000 from Baltimore. And this seemed but the beginning.

The closing years were made happy by still another event. In 1824 Lafayette came back to visit America. And he did not fail to visit Monticello. The two old friends had last seen each other thirty six years ago at the dawn of the French revolution. They had both been young men then, and it had been quite a different world from the one they lived in now. Lafayette was now sixty-seven and permanently lamed from his hardships in prison ; Jefferson was eighty-one and almost on the threshold of death. But they had always written each other and their friendship had not changed nor had their attitude toward the things they had done altered.

For it was no secret to Jefferson that he had not much longer to live. When Adams asked him in a letter whether he would, live his life over gain, he had answered that he would, that he thought his life had been worthwhile and happy, and that he was natural optimist. Jefferson had never suffered from boredom because he had early learnt never to be without an interesting occupation. Though he had been sensitive to criticism, and had received plenty of it, he had learned to bear that, too, so that it had made him give up his faith in free speech for all men.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

He had only one fear, Jefferson said, and that was that he might live too long, leading in his extreme dotage the life of a cabbage and boring others by telling the same old tale four times over. But now even that fear was gone for Jefferson had discovered that he was afflicted by an ailment that would soon carry him off.

One day, as Jefferson was walking off the veranda, a rotten step gave way under him and he fell. His left arm was broken, a serious thing for a man over eighty. For a long time the hand and fingers of his left arm were quite useless, and writing was now almost out of the question. The ailment he had been keeping from his family, which was dysentery complicated by other signs of old age, at last began to sap his great strength, making it difficult for him even to walk, except for a few steps in the garden. But he still insisted on riding.

A day without horseback exercise was for Jefferson like day without sun. His long lean form on horseback had now for many years become one of the things that people in the neighbourhood expected to see daily.

He had even written the epitaph to be carved on his tombstone. It is curious that this man, who had accomplished so much and who had held so many honours, omitted from the simple list of his life achievements. His greatest pride is not in having been President of his country, but in having given it those things by which it would

XVII. HE STILL LIVES

grow great and admirable. His Presidency was of the past, but these three things pointed into the future :

Here Was Buried
THOMAS JEFFERSON

Author Of
The Declaration of American Independence
Of the Statute of Virginia For Religious Freedom
And Father of the University of Virginia

The third of July 1826 found Jefferson in bed ill and dying. The problem troubling him was: Who would take his place as rector of the University of Virginia? He hoped it would be Madison, and felt better at the thought. Then he became delirious. Fifty years were swept aside. The American colonies were about to declare their Revolution to the world. He went through the motions of writing. He spoke of the Committee of Safety. He said: "Warn the Committee to be on the alert."

Jefferson became conscious again in the night. "This is the Fourth?" he asked the people at his bedside. No one answered, for they could not bear to tell him it was not, knowing what he wanted.

"This is the Fourth?" Jefferson repeated. His son-in-law nodded. "Oh," said Jefferson and seemed pleased. Up in Washington they would be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Day of Independence. He had declined

THOMAS JEFFERSON

the invitation to be an honored guest. He had had his own accounts to settle with history on that day. He lay back, satisfied, and history did not cheat him, for it was not until one 'clock in the afternoon of July 4th 1826, that he breathed his last.

Up in Braintree, Massachusetts, that same day, John Adams lay dying in his ninety-first year. As the sun sank on the fiftieth anniversary of the Day of Independence, John Adams died. His last words were:

“Thomas Jefferson still lives.”

